

GAME PREVIEW

Northwestern Wildcats

WOMEN'S SOFTBALL

Kiki Stokes

NU VOLLEYBALL

Melanie Keil

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

HUSKERS

ILLUSTRATED



SPARTY SPOILERS

Clock strikes midnight
on Nebraska's comeback



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The next Huskers Illustrated edition, recapping the Northwestern game and previewing the Rutgers game, will mail on Monday, Oct. 20.



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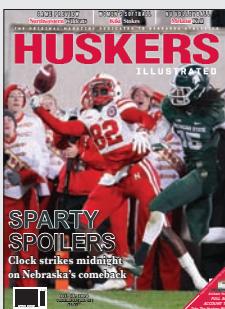
BY LANNY HOLSTEIN & DARREN IVY

Nebraska freshman De'Mornay Pierson-El is a natural as a punt returner, having already run back two for touchdowns this season.

2014 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV/SCORE
AUG. 30	FLORIDA ATLANTIC	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W, 55-7
SEPT. 6	MCNEESE STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11:00 A.M.	W, 31-24
SEPT. 13	@FRESNO STATE	FRESNO, CALIF.	9:30 P.M.	W, 55-19
SEPT. 20	MIAMI	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7:00 P.M.	W, 41-31
SEPT. 27	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	8:00 P.M.	W, 45-14
OCT. 4	@MICHIGAN STATE	EAST LANSING, MICH.	7:00 P.M.	L, 27-22
OCT. 18	@NORTHWESTERN	EVANSTON, ILL.	6:30 P.M.	BTN
OCT. 25	RUTGERS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 1	PURDUE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 15	@WISCONSIN	MADISON, WIS.	TBA	TBD
NOV. 22	MINNESOTA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 28	@IOWA	IOWA CITY, IA	TBA	TBD
DEC. 6	@BIG TEN TITLE GAME	INDIANAPOLIS, IND.	7 P.M.	FOX

ALL GAMES ARE CST



ON THE COVER

Sophomore wide receiver Alonzo Moore tries to haul in what would have been a game-winning catch in the final minute of action against Michigan State. Instead, it slipped through his hands and the Spartans intercepted Tommy Armstrong Jr.'s pass on the next play to preserve a 27-22 victory after NU had rallied from being down 27-3 in the third quarter. The Spartans were able to run out the clock and the game ended at 12:04 a.m.

PHOTO BY MATT MITCHELL/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

HUSKERS LEFT WITH MOTIVATION TO GET A MSU REMATCH

NU GETS OUTPLAYED BADLY IN FIRST THREE QUARTERS, RALLIES LATE

**FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO
WENT TO BED OR GAVE UP WHEN
NEBRASKA TRAILED 27-3 AT THE
END OF THE THIRD QUARTER,
YOU ALMOST MISSED THE BIG-
GEST COMEBACK IN SCHOOL
HISTORY.**

But you didn't.

So maybe it was good that you tuned out and didn't have to watch in agony as the ball squirted out of Alonzo Moore's hands as he was trying to make a one-handed catch in the endzone to send the Huskers on to another dramatic come-from-behind victory.

Or the next play when it appeared a Michigan State player interfered with a Husker receiver only to not get called.

And then to see Trae Waynes make his second interception of the game and NU's fourth turnover of the contest to preserve the Spartans' 27-22 victory.

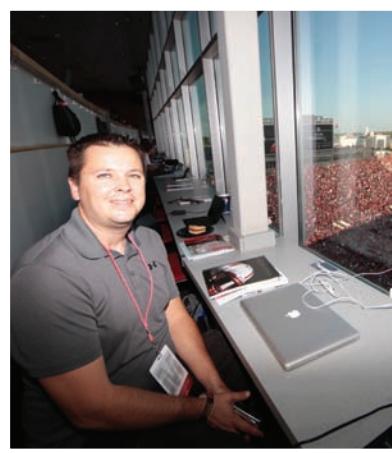
Prior to this 19-0 rally by the Huskers in the fourth quarter, many fans were likely thinking another big game, another Big Red disappointment.

The final outcome is still frustrating considering all that was at stake for Huskers in this nationally-televised game on ABC against an opponent ranked in the top 10.

Unfortunately, by the time the Huskers (5-1, 1-1) played like the team many in Nebraska think they are, many viewers around the country had probably already made up their mind that there was not going to be one more upset on this crazy Saturday and gone to bed or switched to a different channel.

What they will remember about Nebraska is all those golden opportunities the Huskers failed to take advantage of in the first half and how their offense was completely stifled by Michigan State's defense for three quarters.

Nebraska jumped out fast on defense



with an interception by Randy Gregory on the first series but gave back the momentum to Michigan State by opting to punt instead of even attempting a field goal.

After Sam Foltz punted the ball into the endzone for a net punt of 11 yards, the Spartans proceeded to score 17-straight points and the Huskers continued their 17-year losing streak against top-10 teams on the road. The 1997 team that defeated No. 2 Washington in Seattle remains the last NU squad to win on the road against a top-10 foe as the program has now lost nine-straight matchups.

The offensive line was pushed around the first three quarters, giving up as many sacks in the first half as they have all season. Three times Michigan State turned the ball over in the first half, but Nebraska failed to make the Spartans pay, turning the ball over twice themselves.

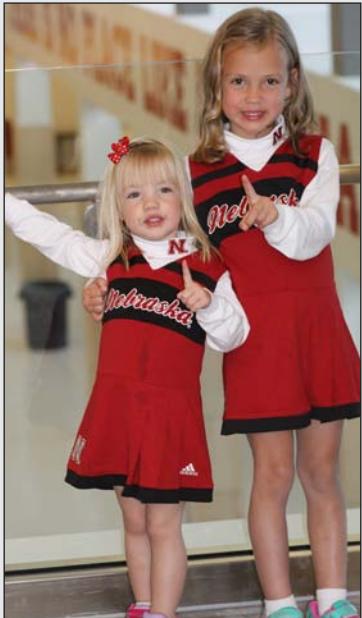
Ameer Abdullah was held to 21 rushing yards in the first half and had a key fumble out of the Wildcat formation inside the MSU 10-yard line.

The best Nebraska can hope for now is to run the table and hope Michigan State does the same to set up a rematch in the Big Ten Championship game. That game would be played inside and on turf, which likely would be better than the conditions in

Things won't be easy going forward as the pressure and negativity are sure to ramp up in Lincoln as many didn't see how hard this group of players fought until the end at East Lansing, only to come up one play short. This loss will sting for two weeks as the Huskers have a bye before traveling to red-hot Northwestern , which has a history of wild finishes with Big Red. So make sure on Oct. 18, you don't give up and watch until the very end.

Behind the N Tough Night to be a Husker Fan

PHOTOS BY MITCHO OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



Clockwise from left: Cheerleader Trista Nelson leads cheers. Abby and Ava Wiegert of Lincoln cheer on the Husker volleyball team in a five-set loss to Ohio State. Cheerleader Cassandra Wilka poses with little fan Anna Bartholomew of Omaha. A fan wears a Go Big Red bear. Amanda, Abby and Ava Wiegert and grandpa Glen Bennett of Omaha enjoyed the action despite the loss. Don and Diane Weldon of Beatrice pose for a photo.

Spartans' run defense stymies Huskers

Tommy Armstrong Jr. fakes a handoff to Terrell Newby as Ameer Abdullah goes the other way. NU only managed 47 rushing yards on 37 carries.



STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY MATT MITCHELL

Slowing Nebraska's previously potent rushing attack helped Michigan State build just enough of a lead to hold on for a 27-22 victory over the Cornhuskers.

Nebraska (5-1, 1-1 Big Ten) came into the contest ranked second in the country in rushing offense, averaging 354.8 yards per game. But Michigan State (4-1, 1-0), which was fourth nationally in rushing defense at 78.3 yards a game, rose to the challenge and limited the Huskers to 47 yards on the ground on 37 carries – an average of 1.3 yards per attempt.

How?

"Schematically, what we do is stop the run," Michigan State coach Mark Dantonio said. "Whether it is zone pressure or the way we get guys in the

box. It was the pursuit angels, tackling in space – guys doing their job and great structure – something that is our trademark here."

Even with the help of three Michigan State turnovers, the Cornhuskers couldn't cash in and trailed 17-0 at halftime.

Nebraska rushed 21 times for just 13 yards in the first two quarters.

Michigan State was able to largely neutralize Nebraska I-back Ameer Abdullah, holding him to 21 yards rushing on 13 attempts in the first half and 45 yards and two touchdowns on 24 carries for the game.

Abdullah, who had played his way into the Heisman Trophy race, had topped the 200-yard mark in rushing in three of his previous five games.

Nebraska coach Bo Pelini acknowl-

edged that his offensive line struggled, which he said came as a surprise.

"Give Michigan State credit – they took it to us up front," Pelini said. "It wasn't scheme. They outplayed us."

The inability to establish anything on the ground forced Nebraska to the air with only limited success early on. Quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. was 9-of-16 passing for 72 yards with one interception in the first half before rallying to finish 20-of-43 passing for 273 yards with two interceptions in addition to being sacked five times.

"The first three quarters, we struggled," Armstrong said. "Up front, we struggled. Out wide, we struggled. Myself, I struggled."

"We just couldn't get the groove – couldn't execute – and it came back to haunt us."

Roach makes career-high 18 stops

STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY MATT MITCHELL

Playing for pride nearly paid off for Nebraska linebacker Trevor Roach and the rest of his teammates on Saturday night in East Lansing, Michigan.

Despite falling behind 27-3 late in the third quarter, the Cornhuskers refused to throw in the towel. That collective determination fueled a furious Nebraska rally that came up just short in a 27-22 loss at Michigan State.

"You've just got to have pride about yourself — same thing as in life," Roach said. "You've just got to keep pushing through. Bad things are going to happen, throughout your entire life — not just football."

"It's how you go through those things is what defines you as a person."

Roach finished with a career-high 18 tackles, including four tackles for loss against the Spartans. The performance bettered the 6-foot-2, 235-pound senior's previous mark of seven tackles against Tennessee-Chattanooga set in the 2011 season opener.

"Roach plays hard," Nebraska defensive coordinator John Papuchis said. "Trevor is a hard-playing guy. He did some good things. He did some things we got to get cleaned up — that's true for everybody."

"One thing about Roach is it matters to him. He competes in everything he does."

Roach said Nebraska's defense was determined not to fold even after the Spartans built a 24-point lead. The Huskers held Michigan State scoreless in its final seven possessions.

"We were just trying to pump everybody

up, like it's never over," Roach said of the mindset of Nebraska's defensive players. "Maybe if it is over, it's about pride. That's kind of what it came down to."

Roach said Nebraska's defense played fairly well overall, but was hurt by a few major lapses.

One play after starting cornerback Daniel Davie left the game due to a minor knee injury, Michigan State quarterback Connor Cook burned the Huskers deep with a 55-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Tony Lippett for a 7-0 first-quarter lead. It was also Lippett who scored from 32 yard out on a reverse to put the Spartans ahead 27-3 with 2:02 remaining in the third quarter.

"Obviously, we let some big plays happen, which that killed us," Roach said. "It happens in every game, but it's just how you respond to it."

Trevor Roach (43) and Corey Cooper wrap up Michigan State running back Jeremy Langford. Roach led NU with a career-high 18 tackles.



Huskers nearly pull off another miracle

Down 27-3 after three quarters, NU scores 19 in the fourth

STORY BY LANNY HOLSTEIN | PHOTO BY MATT MITCHELL

As bleak as things looked in the third quarter - a 27-3 Michigan State advantage at one point - the skies had cleared.

Nebraska held the ball at the Spartan 37 following a 43-yard reception from Alonzo Moore and were down just 27-22 with slightly less than a minute to play.

Then the skies darkened once again on this rainy night in East Lansing, Mich. Moore got open again in the endzone but as he hit the ground the ball squirted loose.

On the next play, Husker quarterback Tommy Armstrong, who struggled his way to 20-of-43 passing, threw a ball into the right sideline. There was some miscommunication with his receiver and he ended up tossing his second interception of the night.

The pass sealed the deal for Michigan State, allowing the Spartans to escape a furious Nebraska comeback and wasting an inspired effort from the Nebraska defense.

"We didn't play well enough the whole game," Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said afterwards. "We didn't play well enough in the second half either. Give Michigan State credit. They took it to us up front. It wasn't blitzing or scheme. They outplayed us."

The Spartans held the Nebraska offense in check until the fourth quarter, when the Huskers exploded for 19 points. Running back Ameer Abdullah was held to just 45 yards on the ground and 67 yards from scrimmage, ending his nation-leading streak of 18-straight games with over 100 yards from scrimmage.

"I don't care what your plan is," Pelini said. "When you're getting your butt kicked up front, it doesn't really matter what the plan is. Whether it was in the run or pass, they dominated us up front."

Offensive lineman Mike Moudy took full responsibility for the loss after the game. He and his mates allowed five sacks and didn't play well enough to get anything going on the ground.

De'Mornay Pierson-El returns a punt 62 yards for a score to draw the Huskers to within 27-22.



"I think it was crap," Moudy said. "Personally, I didn't get my guy off the ball enough. I was in the right place at times, but I didn't get him off the ball. I think that was pretty much down the whole line."

The line did look better in the fourth quarter, when Nebraska went to a more aggressive tempo. The change in speeds lead to 43- and 68-yard touchdown drives in the final period.

"Basically, we were just getting on the ball and snapping it," Moudy said. "We were giving them time to line up and giving them time to do all that in the previous drives, so we went back to our tempo, and it worked."

Necessity forced Nebraska into up-tempo mode in the fourth quarter, but it's

always in the bag of tricks, according to Moudy. Normally, offensive coordinator Tim Beck doesn't deem it necessary.

"We're trying to throw the perfect play at them, so you are going to take a little bit of time out of the clock and see what they do," the lineman said. "Basically, we need to be fast. We need to be up-tempo. It has to be like that all the time."

It was too little too late Saturday, but the Big Ten championship game is still on the radar for Nebraska and a possible rematch with Michigan State serves as motivation to get there. Defensive end Randy Gregory summarized his team's thoughts on that possibility in the tunnel after the loss.

"Oh, we will," he said. "I'm not worried about it."

GameStats

SUMMARY

SCORING

October 4, 2014

Spartan Stadium, East Lansing, Michigan

Attendance: 75,923

	1	2	3	4	F
MICHIGAN STATE	7	10	10	0	27
NEBRASKA	0	0	3	19	22

Q1	8:22 MSU - Lippett, Tony 55 yd pass from Connor Cook (Geiger, Michael kick) 3-80:059	7 0
Q2	13:48 MSU - Langford, Jeremy 31 yd run (Geiger, Michael kick) 1-31:008	14 0
	4:32 MSU - Geiger, Michael 28 yd field goal 7-45 2:52	17 0
Q3	9:18 MSU - Geiger, Michael 27 yd field goal 4-5 1:28	20 0
	6:12 NEB - Brown, Drew 40 yd field goal 13-52 3:06	20 3
	2:02 MSU - Lippett, Tony 32 yd run (Geiger, Michael kick) 7-84 4:05	27 3
Q4	12:49 NEB - Abdullah, Ameer 2 yd run (2 pt run failed) 6-43 1:11	27 9
	4:10 NEB - Abdullah, Ameer 1 yd run (Brown, Drew kick) 5-68 1:37	27 16
	3:22 NEB - Pierson-El, DeMornay 62 yd punt return (2 pt run failed)	27 22

TEAM STATS

	NEBRASKA	MICHIGAN STATE
FIRST DOWNS	20	17
Rushing	5	9
Passing	12	8
Penalty	3	0
NET YARDS RUSHING	47	188
Rushing Attempts	37	44
Average Per Rush	1.3	4.3
Rushing Touchdowns	2	2
Yards Gained Rushing	77	206
Yards Lost Rushing	30	18
NET YARDS PASSING	282	234
Completions-Attempts-Int.	21-45-2	11-29-1
Average Per Attempt	6.3	8.1
Average Per Completion	13.4	21.3
Passing Touchdowns	0	1
TOTAL OFFENSE YARDS	329	422
Total offense plays	82	73
Average Gain Per Play	4.0	5.8
Fumbles: Number-Lost	2-2	2-2
Penalties: Number-Yards	6-48	9-94
PUNTS-YARDS	8-287	9-346
Average Yards Per Punt	35.9	38.4
Net Yards Per Punt	31.0	27.9
Inside 20	1	3
50+ Yards	1	0
Touchbacks	1	0
Fair catch	1	2
KICKOFFS-YARDS	4-239	6-377
Average Yards Per Kickoff	59.8	62.8
Net Yards Per Kickoff	45.5	38.2
Touchbacks	0	4
Punt returns: Number-Yards-TD	2-95-1	4-19-0
Average Per Return	47.5	4.8
Kickoff returns: Number-Yds-TD	2-48-0	4-57-0
Average Per Return	24.0	14.2
Interceptions: Number-Yds-TD	1-0-0	2-0-0
Fumble Returns: Number-Yds-TD	0-0-0	1-38-0
Possession Time	27:51	32:09
Third-Down Conversions	3 of 15	4 of 16
Fourth-Down Conversions	0 of 2	1 of 1
Red-Zone Scores-Chances	3-4	2-3
Touchdowns	2-4	0-3
Field goals	1-4	2-3
Sacks By: Number-Yards	0-0	5-25
PAT Kicks	1-1	3-3
Field Goals	1-1	2-3

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

MICHIGAN STATE

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	Avg
Langford, Jeremy	29	121	10	111	1	31	3.8
Lippett, Tony	1	32	0	32	1	32	32.0
Hill, Nick	9	31	1	30	0	6	3.3
Shelton, R.J.	3	22	0	22	0	9	7.3
TEAM	1	0	1	-1	0	0	-1.0
Cook, Connor	1	0	6	-6	0	0	-6.0
Totals	44	206	18	188	2	32	4.3

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG	SACK
Cook, Connor	11-29-1	234	1	55	0
Totals	11-29-1	234	1	55	0

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
Lippett, Tony	3	104	1	55
Kings, M.	2	38	0	29
Burbridge, A.	2	37	0	22
Mumphrey, Keith	2	34	0	25
Price, Josiah	1	21	0	21
Langford, Jeremy	1	0	0	0
Totals	11	234	1	55

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TBD
Sadler, Mike	8	338	42.2	74	0	1

RETURNS	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	INTERCEPTIONS
Kings, M.	0	0	0	1	28	28	0
Waynes, Trae	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Shelton, R.J.	0	0	0	4	57	20	0

FIELD GOALS	QTR	TIME	DISTANCE	RES
Geiger, Michael	2nd	04:32	28 yds	Good
Geiger, Michael	3rd	09:18	27 yds	Good
Geiger, Michael	4th	01:07	36 yds	Missed

DEFENSE	TS	AT	TT	SACK-YD	TFL-YD	FF	FR-YD	INT-YD	BU	BLK	QBH
34 Jones, Taiwan	6	4	10	1-4	3-8	-	-	-	-	-	-
27 Drummond, K.	8	1	9	-	1-5	-	-	1	-	-	-
15 Waynes, Trae	4	3	7	-	-	-	2-0	2	-	-	-
9 Nicholson, M.	3	4	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
43 Davis, Ed	2	3	5	1-2	2-3	-	-	-	1	-	-
89 Calhoun, S.	3	1	4	1-7	1-7	-	1-38	-	-	3	-
44 Rush, Marcus	3	1	4	1-8	2-11	1	-	-	-	2922	-
92 Heath, Joel	2	1	3	-	1-0	-	-	-	-	-	-
30 Bullough, R.	2	1	3	-	-	-	1-0	-	-	-	-
8 Thomas, L.	2	1	3	1-4	1-4	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 Harris, D.	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
26 Williamson, RJ	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
2 Hicks, Darian	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6 Hicks, Mylan	0	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
74 Conklin, Jack	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4M McDowell, M.	1	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7C Cox, Demet.	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
93 Knox, Damon	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 Sadler, Mike	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-



NEBRASKA

RUSHING	NO	GAIN	LOST	NET	TD	LG	Avg
Abdullah, Ameer	24	48	3	45	2	9	1.9
Armstrong Jr., Tommy	11	29	22	7	0	11	0.6
TEAM	2	0	5	-5	0	0	-2.5

PASSING	C-A-I	YDS	TD	LONG	SACK
Armstrong Jr., Tommy	20-43-2	273	0	43	5
Fyfe, Ryker	1-2-0	9	0	9	0

RECEIVING	NO	YARDS	TD	LONG
Westerkamp, Jordan	9	158	0	41
Bell, Kenny	3	31	0	24
Allen, Taariq	3	9	0	9
Abdullah, Ameer	2	22	0	12
Moore, Alonzo	1	43	0	43
Janovich, Andy	1	16	0	16
Hovey, Lane	1	8	0	9
Pierson-El, De'Mornay	1	5	0	0

PUNTS	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	IN20	TB
Foltz, Sam	8	287	35.9	54	1	1

RETURNS	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	NO	YDS	LG	INTERCEPTIONS
Pierson-El, Dem.	2	95	62	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gregory, Randy	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Abdullah, Ameer	0	0	0	2	48	26	0	0	0	0

FIELD GOALS	QTR	TIME	DISTANCE	RES
Brown, Drew	3rd	06:12	40 yds	Good

DEFENSE	TS	AT	TT	SACK-YD	TFL-YD	FF	FR-YD	INT-YD	BU	BLK	QBH
43 Roach, Trevor	9	18	-	4-9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 Gerry, Nathan	5	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4 Gregory, Randy	1	6	7	-	1-1	-	-	-	-	-	-
13 Anderson, Z	4	2	6	-	1-0	-	-	-	1	-	1
6 Cooper, Corey	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
98 Valentin, Vin.	2	3	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
90 McMullen, Gr.</											

RUSHING OFFENSE: There's no other grade for a part of the game that never got going Saturday. Nebraska managed just 1.3 yards per rush, and the offensive line got blown back on key plays, like the option call in the fourth quarter that got snowed under by Michigan State's defensive line. Ameer Abdullah managed two touchdowns, but ran 24 times for just 45 yards in the loss. That's frankly unacceptable and a big, big part of why Nebraska lost Saturday. – Michael Bruntz

F

PASSING OFFENSE: We'll give Nebraska credit for throwing for 273 yards against a stingy Spartans defense, especially down Kenny Bell and Cethan Carter for most of the game. The offensive line never really gave quarterback Tommy Armstrong much time to throw the ball, and Armstrong had two turnovers as well that loomed large. Give credit to Jordan Westerkamp, who finished with nine catches for 158 yards, but Nebraska was never really able to rely on its passing game consistently on Saturday. – Michael Bruntz

C

RUSHING DEFENSE: Nebraska's front seven played a solid game, and though they had a couple busts, the Huskers kept the Spartans in check, especially late in the game. Trevor Roach and his 18 tackles had a lot to do with the stinginess against the run, and kept the Huskers in the game. Michigan State's Jeremy Langford had 111 yards rushing, but needed 29 carries for that output.

B+

– Michael Bruntz

PASSING DEFENSE: The Huskers never let Connor Cook really get going on Saturday, as the junior quarterback finished 11 for 29 for 234 yards with an interception and a touchdown. Losing Daniel Davie hurt, as shortly after he left the game, Nebraska gave up a long pass play to Cook that went for a touchdown. There's a bit to build on here. Freshman Joshua Kalu played well at corner, and the Huskers were able to get pressure on Cook at times. – Michael Bruntz

B

KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS: Demornay Pierson-El again came up big, returning a fourth quarter punt for a touchdown. He nearly had one in the first quarter as well, but the call was blown dead when officials said he made a fair catch motion. Drew Brown made a 40-yard field goal in tough conditions, and Sam Foltz again punted well, averaging 36 yards per kick in tough weather. – Michael Bruntz

A-

Quoting wide receiver Jordan Westerkamp



On officials not calling pass interference on MSU's final interception of the game:

"The referees are human. Calls like that – they'll get called or they won't get called. It just happens. We got our own calls during the game."

Game Notes

DAVIE INJURY RESHUFFLES DEFENSE

Husker cornerback Daniel Davie went down in the first quarter with an undisclosed injury and never returned. The junior from Beatrice, Neb., had come into his own as of late and was missed immediately.

"It hurt us," defensive coordinator John Papuchis said. "J-Rose (Jonathan Rose) went in there, and the first play he's in there they throw a touchdown pass."

Rose, who lost a tight battle for the second cornerback spot to Davie in fall camp didn't have it Saturday, according to the coaches, so he didn't last long in the game.

"We put (Josh) Kalu in, but he's a true freshman, and he's learning every time he plays corner," Papuchis said. "It was the first time he's played corner, so it affected us."

Kalu stayed in the game for the rest of contest, making a tackle and breaking up a pass, but it was tough being throwing into the game at a position he hadn't been working at in practice.

"I've always had a respect for the corner position. You're out there on an island for the most part," Kalu said. "Playing nickel and corner, you're playing different techniques for the most part. I've had a taste of it from fall camp, but having to adjust to it was hard."

PIERSON-EL STRIKES AGAIN

Nebraska's furious finish against Michigan State wouldn't have been quite so furious without a little help from punt return extraordinaire De'Mornay Pierson-El. The true freshman capped the Husker scoring with a 62-yard punt return touchdown to make the score 27-22 in the fourth quarter. Pierson-El had been close to breaking a few returns earlier in the game, and he knew he was going to do something special if he just got the chance.

"I felt it coming," Pierson-El said. "I told the defense to get one more stop, and I would put one in the end zone. They gave me the one stop, and it's all history."

Pierson-El caught the ball along the right sideline, making the grab on the run. His blocking was set up, and when a lane formed, the speedster outran a couple Spartan defenders to the end zone.

"I knew when it went off of his foot that it was a catchable ball," Pierson-El said. "It was high, and (MSU's punter) kicked it out of his coverage. Coach Bo (Pelini) talked to me about if he did that to make him pay."

The return was a bit of justice in the freshman's mind. He felt he had one earlier in the game, when the officials stopped him in his tracks with a fair catch call.

"I had what I wanted, a lane set up, but they said I had called for a fair catch," Pierson-El said. "I didn't. I wanted that one back, but everything happens for a reason."



MATT MITCHELL/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Daniel Davie breaks up a pass during the first quarter. He was injured shortly after and did not return.

TRICKED AGAIN

The famous Michigan State trick play arsenal reared its head once again Saturday, much to the chagrin of the Nebraska coaches.

With two minutes to go in the third quarter, wide receiver Tony Lippett took a double reverse 32-yards around the right end for a game deciding touchdown.

"We have to have contain on that," Nebraska defensive coordinator John Papuchis said. "We got leveraged inside as they were playing the initial reverse. Obviously, you don't see a whole lot of double reverses, and they outflanked us. When you lose your fundamentals, that's what happens."

A season ago, the Spartans got the better of the Huskers on a fake field goal, converting a fourth-down and sealing a game that was still in hand.

STREAKS SNAPPED

Nebraska dropped to 5-1 with tonight's loss, ending a six-game overall win streak. The loss was the Huskers' second straight to Michigan State and the first time the Spartans have defeated Nebraska in three meetings in East Lansing. Nebraska dropped to 1-3 in Big Ten road openers and dropped to 8-5 overall in Big Ten Conference road games. The Huskers lost for the ninth straight time on the road against a top-10 opponent. The five-point loss snapped the Huskers' nation-leading 10-game win streak in games decided by seven or fewer points.

ABDULLAH FINDS GOING TOUGH

Nebraska senior I-back Ameer Abdullah rushed 24 times for 45 yards and two fourth-quarter touchdowns. Abdullah increased his

career rushing total to 3,855 yards, moving him within 25 yards of Ahman Green for second place on Nebraska's all-time rushing chart.

With his 24 carries, Abdullah increased his career rushing attempts total to 687, setting a Nebraska record for career carries. The previous record of 668 carries was held by Mike Rozier (1981-83). In addition to his 45 rushing yards, Abdullah had 22 receiving yards and 48 yards on kickoff returns, giving him 115 all-purpose yards. With his 115 all-purpose yards, Abdullah became the seventh player in Big Ten history with more than 6,000 career all-purpose yards. Abdullah now has 6,089 career all-purpose yards to rank sixth in Big Ten history, passing Michigan's Anthony Thomas (6,000 yards).

FINAL SCORE: MICHIGAN STATE 27, NU 22





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: TREVOR ROACH (43) AND BYERSON COCKRELL TRY TO RECOVER A MICHIGAN STATE FUMBLE IN THE FIRST HALF. COCKRELL EVENTUALLY FELL ON THE LOOSE BALL FOR THE HUSKERS. JORDAN WESTERKAMP MAKES ONE OF HIS CAREER-HIGH NINE CATCHES FOR 158 YARDS. TAARIQ ALLEN MAKES ONE OF HIS THREE CATCHES IN THE GAME. SENIOR LINEBACKER ZAIRE ANDERSON BRINGS DOWN MICHIGAN STATE'S JEREMY LANGFORD. AMEER ABDULLAH UN-SUCCESSFULLY TRIES TO HAUL IN PASS FROM TOMMY ARMSTRONG JR. IN THE FIRST HALF.

PHOTOS BY
MATT MITCHELL

Michigan State Recap



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: SAM COTTON TRIES TO BLOCK MICHIGAN STATE'S MARCUS RUSH TO GIVE QUARTERBACK TOMMY ARMSTRONG JR. TIME TO STRONG. AMEER ABDULLAH SCORED TWICE, INCLUDING THIS TOUGH RUN IN THE FOURTH QUARTER, BUT ONLY MANAGED 45 YARDS ON 24 CARRIES. WITH HIS 24 CARRIES, ABDULLAH PASSED MIKE ROZIER FOR THE MOST CARRIES ALL-TIME AT NEBRASKA. GREG McMULLEN TACKLES CONNOR COOK FOR A LOSS OF SIX YARDS. RANDY GREGORY AND TREVOR ROACH TACKLE MSU'S NICK HILL. ON OPPOSITE PAGE: SOPHOMORE WIDE RECEIVER ALONZO MOORE MADE A 43-YARD CATCH TO SET UP NU AT THE MSU 37-YARD LINE IN THE FINAL MINUTE. HE THEN ALMOST HAULED IN THIS GAME-WINNER, BUT LOST THE BALL WHEN HE HIT THE GROUND.

PHOTOS BY MATT MITCHELL



Oh So Close...Moore can't finalize game-winning catch



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2Minute Drill



De'Mornay Pierson-El gets free on a punt return against Michigan State.

PIERSON-EL EMERGES AS RETURN THREAT

MATT MITCHELL/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

By Darren Ivy, Lanny Holstein and Michael Bruntz

True freshman De'Mornay Pierson-El broke onto the scene against Fresno State, returning a Bulldog punt 86-yards for a touchdown. In a single play, he outgained the entire Nebraska punt return unit for the 2013 season (70 yards).

On Saturday night against Michigan State, Pierson-El returned his second punt for a score, covering 62 yards in the fourth quarter to make it 27-22.

Pierson-El had no idea what he had done in the Fresno State game, and that's partly the point. He is ignorant of the struggles Nebraska's had in that phase of the game, and doesn't care enough to be made nervous by it.

"I really try not to think about it too much," Pierson-El said. "I try to think about getting us good field position and that we get the ball back. Don't focus on it too much."

He was a stud returner back at West Potomac High School in Alexandria, Va., and blindly brought confidence from that into his role at Nebraska.

"Not to be cocky, but my scouting report said 'Don't kick to me,'" Pierson-El said back in July.

Bringing that attitude to Lincoln, Pierson-El was met with a few incumbents at the position, like Ameer Abdullah and Kenny Bell to name a couple, but he knew there would be a chance to get in the game. When the incumbents struggled to catch punts the first couple weeks, Pierson-El got what he was looking for.

"I knew it was an opportunity and everything, so I just gave it my best shot," he said. "When the opportunity was given, I just made plays and it just so happened that it fell my way."

The next step for Pierson-El is to break onto the kickoff return team. To this point, the Nebraska coaches have been cautious with him on that unit, but fans want him out there. Pierson-El wants that too.

"In practice I do it, but I just need to understand the scheme a little bit more," he said. "I'm sure coach will try to mix it up a little bit more when Ameer (Abdullah) gets tired or when Kenny (gets) tired."

The kickoff return scheme doesn't usually get a ton of play, but the true freshman claims it's more important than you think. It's the only thing holding him back.

"The scheme behind kickoff is a lot different than it is on punt return," he said. "I just have to follow my blocks a little more and watch the film to get my keys and understand how that works. I'm pretty sure the coaches know that."

The one chance he did get in a game to show off on kickoff return, Pierson-El biffed it. Against Fresno State, he was back deep when a kickoff sailed down the right side line, heading out of bounds. Pierson-El tried to field the ball before it went out, but ended up fumbling it out of bounds instead.

"The coaches told me that was a learning experience," the freshman said of the muffed return. "When it's like that, you just have to let it go. They weren't mad or anything like that, they actually laughed at me and hit me on the head."

For all his effectiveness, Pierson-El admittedly has a long way still to go. He's careful not to overstep his bounds.

"I'm a freshman, and I don't want to have Bo (Pelini) coming down on me," he said. "I've seen what some freshman around the nation have done wrong, and I don't want to do that and get on Bo's bad side. None of that."

That means no showboating or strutting down the field like his idol Deion Sanders used to do. It will be more of a businesslike approach from Pierson-El, in the vein of some more recent stars that he emulates

HI'S TOP 5

SINGLE-SEASON PUNT RETURNERS IN SCHOOL HISTORY



MATT MITCHELL/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

1 DEJUAN GROCE
2002 - 43 returns, 732 yards

2 JOHNNY RODGERS,
1972 - 39 returns, 618 yards

3 JOHNNY RODGERS
1971 - 33 returns, 548 yards

4 DEJUAN GROCE
2001 33 returns, 469 yards

5 LARRY WACHHOLTZ
1965 - 31 returns, 452 Yards

De'Mornay Pierson-El is halfway through the regular season and already on track to break into the top five single-season leaders for punt return yards. His 19 returns for 334 yards ranks him seventh all-time. He needs 119 more return yards to move into the top five. His 86-yard return for a touchdown against Fresno State ranks seventh all-time in school history. He also added a 62-yard punt return for a score against Michigan State.

Freshman Kieron Williams (27) has seen extensive playing time already for the Huskers.



DOLLAR DEEENDER

KIERON WILLIAMS

Nebraska freshman safety Kieron Williams has gotten on the field in a new role as the Dollar linebacker. Williams now spends double time studying for both of his roles with the Blackshirt defense.

Story By LANNY HOLSTEIN • Photo By JIMMY RASH

What was it like learning the dollar position (basically the middle linebacker) as primarily a safety?

"It was new to me, a bunch of installation. I was all for it when we installed it, Monday, so I had been getting in my book, looking it over, so I wouldn't make any mistakes come game time. It was fun. I had a lot of freedom to blitz down the edge and down the middle."

How well did you do in that role against Illinois?

"I feel like I did well. From what coach Bo and coach JP gave me, I got in my book and made sure I knew what to do. I feel like I did well, but I couldn't have done it without the help of the older guys like Josh Banderas and Trevor Roach. They helped me with the Mike position."

From the Mike/Dollar position, were you in charge of getting guys in place?

"No. I wasn't in charge of that. I'm not that far along yet. It was more just communication between all of us, Coop getting me the call and from Nate (Gerry) too."

What was your first thought when the coaches wanted you to take on the Dollar role?

"Actually, the game before Illinois, I was playing all special teams, and I had been praying about it. God, please let me learn this defense and just give me a chance. Literally, that Monday I had the chance to play a whole lot. I knew it was a blessing and what I had asked for."

Do you have any history playing linebacker before this?

"Actually, I was basically a linebacker in high school. That's all I played. I was more in the box, maybe twice I played on top of the house in high school. I was in the box reading the guards, reading the tight ends,

doing all that type of stuff, so this was more what I was comfortable with."

Do you think it confused the Illinois quarterback when you were out there at Mike?

"When the quarterback saw me, he was probably like, "This kid is small, lets go." I'm not a Josh Banderas or a Trevor Roach or anything. He was probably freaked out a little bit seeing Randy standing up too and seeing a lot of guys who can cover. We have a lot of guys who can blitz too, so they don't know where its coming from or if its coming or not."

You are a guy that takes learning the playbook really seriously, so what did you do to cram for a new position?

"It was interesting. I tried to stay up late and get in some late work. I talked to the linebackers coach (Ross Els) a whole lot, so I could get the fits. They are totally different fits than I've been doing all year. I also went, as I said, to Bando and Roach to learn certain moves."

Have the coaches told you how much more they will use you in this Dollar role?

"No. Its more just playing it by ear, looking to help wherever I can help. If its special teams, its special teams. If its what we call Dollar, then that's where I'm going to play."

Would you like to keep playing that Dollar role?

"Oh, yeah. If I didn't, I wouldn't be a competitor. I'd like for it to keep going, but if we play a team that runs a lot, I won't probably be on the field as much. If we play a team that throws it around, I'll be out there."

Do you prefer playing safety or linebacker?

"I like blitzing, but at the same time, I like being able to go out there and get picks. I guess that's why they call me a hybrid."

like Devin Hester and Percy Harvin.

Speaking of idols, Pierson-El is becoming one around the state of Nebraska, and he doesn't mind being the name little kids shout as they run across their backyards.

"I was that kid at one point in time," he said. "To now be the guy that some kid is trying to be like, it's something that I'm happy about. I just have to keep doing what I have to do."

LOOKING AT THE TAPE

Heading into Michigan State, the focus around the Husker football team was on cleaning up turnovers. Although the team had been relatively average in the category through five games, a quick look back to last season's meeting with the Spartans was enough to make turnovers a focus.

The Huskers will look back on a previous meeting with an opponent for inspiration or to fix previous mistakes, according to Coach Bo Pelini.

"Well anytime you have history with somebody, you watch some of the previous games and try to learn from them," he said. "They're doing the same. This will be a separate deal. There are things you can always learn, both good and bad, from looking at what's happened previously against an opponent."

Nebraska turned the ball over five times to Michigan State's zero a year ago.

CHANGES IN THE SECONDARY

Nebraska mixed more zone concepts into its defense for the Miami and Illinois games than they have at any point before, according to defensive coordinator



John Papuchis.

They needed help switching off crossing routes, according to the coach, and zone is the best way to combat teams that like to rub defensive players. That being said, Nebraska will never stray too far away from the man-principal, matchup zone defense coach Bo Pelini has made his name on.

And playing that kind of defense requires aggressive, experienced cornerbacks.

"Out there, there's not a

lot of room for error when you're playing on the edge," Pelini said. "You're playing out there and you've got to stay within your technique. You've got to challenge people."

Nebraska is working in a horde of new cover men behind senior Josh Mitchell, and Pelini is happy with the way those guys have done in recent weeks.

"Pretty good at times, inconsistent at times," the coach said. "You have to get

Kenny Bell hugs the official after making a touchdown catch against Illinois.

PELINI PRAISES BELL

Senior wide receiver Kenny Bell is in his fifth season at Nebraska, and it feels like he's been around for longer. Sometimes the afro-wearing receiver is taken for granted, but not this past Monday when Coach Bo Pelini went off on

how great he's meant to the football team.

"He's a total package. He's a team guy," Pelini said. "If Kenny played in one of these spread offenses, he'd probably catch maybe a hundred balls. He's a great receiver and somebody who's a weapon. But he understands that isn't our offense. That isn't how we play."

Bell's best season, at least statistically, came a couple years ago in 2012 when he caught 50 balls for 863 yards and eight touchdowns. He regressed slightly in the yardage and touchdown categories while actually catching a couple more balls in 2013, but he still has a chance to be Nebraska's all-time leading receiver by season's end. Johnny Rodgers leads the current list with 2,479 career receiving yards, and Bell was at 2,290 after the Illinois game. Bell was also within 8 scores of Rodgers' career touchdown record (25).

"He doesn't get caught up in all that," Pelini said of Bell. "He is mature enough to understand that statistics don't tell the whole tale. You've got to keep that in perspective."

Pelini looks at Bell's value more so as a leader than anything else.

"We knew he was a good kid (when we recruited him)," the coach said. "Kenny's grown up big time since he's been here. Matured. I think leadership qualities have started to really come out this year."

GERRY COMING ON

Safety Nate Gerry has been arguably the most consistent player on the Husker defense in the early season, according to coach Bo Pelini. The sophomore is making more of the right reads than he did a year ago.

Nate Gerry pressures Illinois quarterback Reilly O'Toole earlier this season.



"I think he's a good football player, and I think he has a good understanding," Pelini said. "I think he has a long way to go yet. Like anybody else, it's about doing it down-in down-out consistency, learning and applying it every week."

The coach went on to say Gerry's time at linebacker a season ago might be helping him at his new position.

"I really do. I think it's helped him a lot," Pelini said. "I think Coop (Corey Cooper) benefitted from the same thing early on in his career. You play up there, you kind of understand how things work up front. I think it makes you better when you go back. It gives you a whole different perspective understanding run fits and that type of thing and how the thing around you is happening. And I think Nate benefitted from that."

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

Michigan coach Brady Hoke took some serious heat this past week for his handling of backup quarterback

Shane Morris's concussion versus Minnesota. Nebraska Coach Bo Pelini said his team has a system in place to deal with head injuries in the case that a situation like Morris' would occur at Nebraska.

"That's really not my job," Pelini said. "Our trainers and doctors do a great job with that. Our doctors and trainers are looking at the game from a whole different perspective than I am."

The doctors at Nebraska have been put to use more than a few times, according to the coach. Unlike at Michigan, where Brady Hoke had no idea his player was concussed, Nebraska relays that information to the head coach.

"We've been around that sort of thing a couple times, and like I said, pretty quickly you tell them to get out," he said. "If it's happening in the huddle then it's not easy to find. A lot of time his teammates will give people a heads up."

Even with eyes all over the field, there are still some situations beyond anyone's

control, Pelini said.

"If a guy is stumbling around, you're going to see it, but if a guy gets dinged a little bit, it's hard to see that until you look into their eyes," Pelini said. "That's hard to see from the press box, but like I said, every case is a little bit different. Some are easier to spot than others obviously."

SANTOS, NEWBY DON'T MAKE MICHIGAN TRIP

Nebraska released its travel roster for the Michigan State trip, and both linebackers Marcus Newby and David Santos did not make the trip to take on Michigan State. Santos didn't play last week against Illinois, while Newby didn't travel because of a leg injury.

Junior offensive lineman Matt Finnin also didn't make the trip because of illness. Sophomore offensive lineman Sam Hahn traveled in place of Finnin. The only other addition to the travel roster is backup kicker Spencer Lindsay. The Huskers are only able to travel 70 to this game per Big Ten rules after being able to travel as many 80 to the non-conference game against Fresno State earlier this year.



RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER
RECRUITING EDITOR
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Huskers already have landed three for '16

Nebraska scored two more commitments for the 2016 Class on Saturday with the additions of Bryan Brokop and John Raridon. That brings Nebraska up to three for the class, joining tight end Jared Bubak.

The fast start to the 2016 group is a good thing for the Huskers and shows evidence of the staff's commitment of working two classes at a time. NU has done a nice job of getting kids on campus well before the backhalf of their junior year. Both Brokop and Raridon had visited Nebraska several times before the Illinois game and had great relationships with John Garrison.

Here's a look at five other targets for 2016 that the Huskers are working toward getting back to campus and potentially on board:

Matt Farniok – Nebraska likes the 2016 crop of linemen and with Brokop and Raridon on board, attention turns to Farniok as the next big target for Garrison and Barney Cotton. The Huskers will need to beat out Oklahoma – where

his brother goes to school – and several other big programs.

One thing that might help is having former Sioux Falls Washington safety Nate Gerry as a starting safety on the defense. That familiarity can help sell things and it tells Farniok that Nebraska will give players a chance as soon as they earn the opportunity. There's no timeline here, so this one could go into next spring.

C.J. Morgan-Walker – A Louisiana defensive back prospect, Nebraska has shown a lot of interest in Morgan-Walker since assistant Tim Beck showed up to a practice to watch last spring. From that point on, Morgan-Walker has been in consistent contact with defensive backs assistant Charlton Warren and the two have developed a good relationship.

Morgan-Walker is the only name on this short list that hasn't yet visited Nebraska, but the good news is that he's a likely junior day visitor once the Huskers get something on the schedule. There's a lot

to like here with his size and competitiveness, NU just has to build the relationship strong enough to last the eventual SEC teams that will come looking for secondary help.

Garrett Rand – First saw Rand on Nebraska's campus during camp in 2013. The big defensive lineman stood out from the group even though he was just coming off his sophomore season. The Husker staff had him pulled aside with a few other defenders and Rand was clearly holding his own.

Now more than a year later the Huskers are in the process of recruiting the defensive lineman, who is a high four-star and will be garnering a lot of attention throughout his junior and senior campaigns. Family helped bring him to Lincoln on the visit – might it help get him back out around the staff again?

Tristen Wallace – A lot has been written about Wallace, but this four-star quarterback has a chance to be a scary good player. He's a special, almost over-developed athlete for his

age and in a small sample size has taken well to the quarterback position.

Nebraska offered Wallace early, got him to campus for Big Red Weekend and has stayed in contact with the quarterback throughout. That will help, but NU needs to be diligent, needs to keep pushing and get him back – whether it's for a game or for a junior day. He's a big target and one that could be the face of the class if the team reels him in.

Devin White – Another Big Red Weekend visitor, White is a top running back target for Nebraska with Imani Cross slated to graduate in 2015. That opens the door for another power running back and White is the one the Huskers really want.

Nebraska will be in battle with a lot of different SEC programs for White. The running back has already carved out a name for himself. NU can sell him on opportunity and on its consistent stable of running backs, that is deep, but very competitive. **N**

Nebraska misses golden opportunity to take step forward as a program

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

NEBRASKA HEAD COACH Bo Pelini often talks about being careful to not ride the roller coaster – not getting too high after wins or too low after losses.

He could have been talking about the swings between the quarters for Nebraska in Saturday's 27-22 loss to Michigan State.

Nebraska will head home to Lincoln feeling like they played well enough to win – and at times the Huskers did – but it wasn't enough and Nebraska will be left to play the what-if game over the bye.

With an opportunity to make a statement on a national stage, in front of a national television offense and legitimately put itself in the College Football Playoff talk at the midpoint of the season, Nebraska – at times – looked like a team that still isn't ready for the bright lights.

These kinds of games between ranked foes often come down to whether teams can make key plays and take advantage of opportunities when they present themselves. In the week leading up to Saturday's game, much of the talk had centered on coming out swinging on the first drive.

Nebraska's defense did that, forcing an interception on Michigan State's opening drive, but as would become a theme for the night, the Husker offense failed to take advantage of the opportunities. Swinging and missing and getting caught on the ropes. Nebraska had three drives start in Michigan State territory in the first half Saturday, and came away with zero points.

Nebraska got the turnovers it didn't get last year against Michigan State, but came away with zilch in the first half, Nebraska's defense forced two turnovers and four punts. For this version of Nebraska/Michigan State, it was less about what Michigan State did, and more about what Nebraska couldn't do on the offensive end until waking up late.

Michigan State was selling out to stop Abdullah and the run, and the offensive line wasn't able to get any kind of push to speak of, spinning its tires in the soaked Spartan Stadium grass.

Abdullah has been at his best when he's able to get off tackle and make a cut from there. In the first half, he carried the ball 13 times for 21 yards and was never really a factor. His best play came on a delayed pass to the flat, but Nebraska seemed unwilling to break open the screen game and other wrinkles it has in the playbook. At the start of the fourth quarter, Nebraska had 28 yards rushing on 28 carries.

With Abdullah bottled up, Michigan State was free to turn things loose on Armstrong, who never had much time to set and throw. Factor that with the fact that he



Bo Pelini said
after Saturday's
game that he's
not into moral
victories, and in-
deed, Saturday's
loss feels like
another
opportunity lost
to take a step
forward as a
program.

was already without his top receiving tight end, and lost top receiver Kenny Bell midway through the first half to injury, and it was a recipe for stagnation.

Give credit, though, to Nebraska's defense, who never stopped playing, and forced six-straight scoreless drives by the Spartans as the Huskers mounted a late comeback. Still, it wasn't enough to overcome the slow start.

This year, Nebraska's offense nicknamed itself the Red Storm, and in the games leading up to Saturday's loss, the Husker offense definitely put up some gaudy numbers in wins over Miami and Illinois. But after walking off the wet Spartan Stadium turf having never really threatened to solve Michigan State's defense, it's time for some soul searching.

Pelini said after Saturday's game that he's not into moral victories, and indeed, Saturday's loss feels like another opportunity lost to take a step forward as a program.

Does Nebraska get anything out of the narrow loss? Time will tell. This team desperately needs this bye week to get a number of its top players – Cethan Carter, Kenny Bell and Daniel Davie healthy for what will be a demanding stretch of games in November.

The key will be getting off the roller coaster, and playing their best when the lights are brightest. **N**

*Read daily Husker reports from
Michael Bruntz at
HuskersIllustrated.com
Follow him on Twitter
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Scouting Report



Northwestern Wildcats

Northwestern turns things around, finds itself atop the East Division standings.

| DOUG GRIFFITHS

Is there a team in college football that has turned its season around in two weeks like Northwestern has?

Probably not.

The Wildcats have had great back-to-back weeks in beating Penn State and Wisconsin.

How has Northwestern been able to turn

things around after suffering early-season home losses to California and Northern Illinois?

"I think we're definitely playing with a lot more passion and a lot more physicality than we did earlier in the year," Wildcat coach Pat Fitzgerald said. "I don't have any issues with what we did early in the year,



Quarterback Trevor Siemian entered the season with the third-most career passing yards among Big Ten opening-day starters.

THE VITALS

WHAT: #19 Nebraska @ Northwestern

WHEN/WHERE: 6:30 p.m. CDT, Oct. 18 in Evanston, Ill. (Ryan Field capacity 47,130)

TV: Big Ten Network

Radio: The Husker Sports Network broadcasts the action to 27 statewide radio markets. KFAB (1110 AM) serves as the Omaha affiliate and KLIN (1400 AM) serves as the Lincoln affiliate, while KRVN (880 AM) is a third affiliate that reaches around the state. Join Greg Sharpe (play-by-play), Matt Davison (color and co-hosts Husker Game Day Pregame Show), Lane Grindle (sideline/post-game, co-hosts Husker Game Day), Steve Taylor (co-hosts Husker Game Day Show and Big Red Reaction Show) and Matt Coatney (hosts Big Red Reaction Show and helps anchor postgame studio coverage) for all the action. The game can also be heard live on Huskers.com and SIRIUS Satellite Radio.

COACHES: Nebraska: Bo Pelini (63-25 overall, 35-15 in the Big Ten, seven seasons). Northwestern: Pat Fitzgerald (58-48 overall, 29-37 in the Big Ten, nine seasons).

SERIES: Nebraska leads 5-2

NORTHWESTERN FAST FACTS

Location: Evanston, Ill.

Enrollment: 8,367

All-Time Football Record: 261-645-44

All-Time Big Ten Record: 260-466-22

Conference Championships: 8 (last 2000)

Post-Season Record: 2-10

Consensus All-Americans: 13

First-Team All-Big Ten Selections: 134

Lettermen Returning/Lost: 54/14

Starters Returning/Lost: 18/6 (including specialists)

Offensive Formation: Spread

Defensive Formation: Multiple 4-3

DID YOU KNOW?

Northwestern is 2-0 in the Big Ten for the first time since its 2000 championship year.

2014 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 30	California	L, 24-31
Sept. 6	Northern Illinois	L, 15-23
Sept. 20	Western Illinois	W, 24-7
Sept. 27	@ Penn State	W, 29-6
Oct. 4	Wisconsin	W, 20-14
Oct. 11	@ Minnesota	
Oct. 18	Nebraska	
Nov. 1	@ Iowa	
Nov. 8	Michigan	
Nov. 15	@ Notre Dame	
Nov. 22	@ Purdue	
Nov. 29	Illinois	

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NORTHWESTERN SPORTS INFORMATION

Scouting Report



except for what we were doing on Saturdays."

STINGY DEFENSE

Northwestern's defense is a force to be reckoned with.

The Wildcats entered their game against Wisconsin third in the Big Ten allowing opponents 16.8 points per game.

They held the Badgers to just 14 points. That's pretty impressive when you consider Wisconsin entered the game averaging more than 39 points per game through four outings.

The Badgers also had been averaging 343.2 rushing yards a game and the Wildcats "held" them to 284.

Against Penn State, Northwestern limited the Nittany Lions to just 50 rushing yards on 25 attempts, while racking up 4.0 sacks and 9.0 tackles for loss.

BLOCK PARTY

Northwestern's special teams defense has come up big in 2014, recording four blocked kicks over the last three games. The 'Cats are tied with Rutgers as the FBS leader in blocked kicks this season.

CARDIAC 'CATS

After a 2012 season in which Northwestern held fourth-quarter leads in all 13 games it played (finishing 10-3 on the year), the 'Cats led or were tied in the fourth quarter of nine of 12 outings last season. Entering the 2013 season, Fitzgerald was an impressive 21-10 in games decided by seven points or less during his tenure in Evanston. However, winning close games as of late has not been Northwestern forte. The Wildcats have played eight one-score games in their last 11 outings and won two of those eight.

YOUNG AT RUNNING BACK

Northwestern is playing a pair of true freshmen at running back this season.

Justin Jackson and Solomon Vault have seen significant time during their rookie campaigns.

The tandem accounted for all three Northwestern touchdowns in the win over Western Illinois. Jackson had a career day against Wisconsin, running for 162 yards.

REMEMBER WHEN?

Nebraska 27, Northwestern 24

Nov. 2, 2013 at Lincoln, Nebraska

Who will ever forget Nebraska's thrilling victory over Northwestern in Memorial Stadium?

Ron Kellogg III's desperation heave was tipped and caught by Jordan Westerkamp in the end zone with no time remaining lifting the Cornhuskers to a dramatic victory.

Northwestern took a 24-21 lead when Jeff Budzien kicked a 21-yard field goal with 1:20 remaining.

Nebraska started its game-winning drive at its 17 with no timeouts.

Ameer Abdullah ran 24 times for 127 carries. He helped convert a fourth-and-15 situation by catching a short pass and fighting his way to the first-down marker.

Tommy Armstrong Jr. threw for 173 yards and a touchdown, but was intercepted three times.

Northwestern got 149 yards rushing from Trevon Green and a career-high three touchdowns.

LAST TIME OUT?

Northwestern 20, No. 17 Wisconsin 14

Oct. 4, 2014 at Evanston, Illinois

The Wildcats followed up their road win against Penn State by knocking off visiting Wisconsin. Godwin Igwebuike had three interceptions and Justin Jackson ran for 162 yards to help the resurgent 'Cats. Quarterback Trevor Siemian threw one touchdown pass and had a key block on Miles Shuler's 16-yard touchdown run. The win was Northwestern's third in a row.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Over the past four games, Northwestern has outscored its opponents in the first half, 38-10.

- The 'Cats are 33-14 under Coach Pat Fitzgerald when forcing more turnovers than their foes.

- Northwestern went nine quarters this season allowing only two field goals.

- The Wildcats' 23-point victory in Happy Valley this season marked Penn State's most lopsided home loss since 2001.

- Northwestern's football team posted a 3.04 GPA for 2013-14. The Wildcats rank as the Big Ten's best in Academic Progress Rate and second in the nation among 125 FBS programs with a score of 991 out of a possible 1,000.

Coach Pat Fitzgerald



Resume: The 39-year-old Fitzgerald has a 58-48 overall record in nine seasons as Northwestern's head coach, including 29-37 in the Big Ten. He has led the 'Cats to five bowl appearances and is the all-time winningest coach in Northwestern football history. Fitzgerald was a consensus All-American linebacker at Northwestern.

KNOW YOUR FOE

Trevor Siemian, QB, 6-3, 215, Sr.



He has thrown 23 career touchdown passes, tying him for eighth on Northwestern's all-time touchdown list. This season, he has completed 57 percent of his passes while throwing for 1,054 yards and three touchdowns in five games.

Dan Vitale, SB, 6-2, 235, Jr.



Has at least one catch in 17 straight games. Vitale has a team-high 20 catches this season. He has six touchdowns in his career. Vitale had a career-high 113 yards on seven receptions against Penn State.

Godwin Igwebuike, S, 6-0, 200, Fr.



He had three interceptions against Wisconsin, marking the first time a Wildcat player had three picks in a game since 1973. Those were his first three this season. He also has three pass deflections and has made a total of 15 tackles on the season.

2013 RESULTS

(5-7 overall, 1-7 Big Ten)

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 31	@ California	W, 44-30
Sept. 7	Syracuse	W, 48-27
Sept. 14	Western Michigan	W, 38-17
Sept. 21	Maine	W, 35-21
Oct. 5	Ohio State	L, 30-40
Oct. 12	@ Wisconsin	L, 6-35
Oct. 19	Minnesota	L, 17-20
Oct. 26	@ Iowa	L, 10-17 (OT)
Nov. 2	@ Nebraska	L, 24-27
Nov. 16	Michigan	L, 19-27 (3OT)
Nov. 23	Michigan State	L, 6-30
Nov. 30	@ Illinois	W, 37-34



BIGTEN BEAT | COMPILED BY DOUG GRIFFITHS

Northwestern now atop West standings, Spartans survive NU

There certainly is no shortage of story-lines in the Big Ten these days.

Whether it's a couple coaches on the hot seat, Michigan State getting back into the serious discussion of the four-team playoff or Northwestern's complete turnaround in just a couple weeks, there's plenty to talk about with regards to Big Ten football.

We knew going into this week, Brady Hoke was in serious trouble at Michigan and that only intensified with his concussed quarterback Shane Morris remaining in the Minnesota game. As a result, Michigan students protested for Hoke's firing as well as athletic director Dave Brandon's dismissal.

The pressure was so intense that when Hoke addressed the media a couple days after the loss to the Gophers, all he talked about was the Morris incident.

"We would never, ever, if we thought a guy had a concussion, keep him in the game – and we never have," Hoke said.

Shortly thereafter, Michigan announced changes to its medical policy going forward.

Joining Hoke on the hot seat is Illinois coach Tim Beckman, who suffered a humiliating home loss to lowly Purdue. That loss may be the end of Beckman's tenure in Champaign after he entered the season on thin ice.

Prior to the game, the *Chicago Sun-Times* wrote an article saying Illinois' athletic director should be thinking about life after Beckman and called the Purdue game a "must-win situation for Illinois."

Beckman is now 1-17 in Big Ten play and finding three more wins (which is what would be necessary to become bowl eligible) on the Illini's schedule is very far-fetched now.

What might not be as far-fetched is Michigan State getting back into the discussion of possibly being in the national

playoff picture. Considering all the upsets this past Saturday, including four to top-10 teams, the Spartans could be in the mix when the dust settles if they run the table.

Then there's Northwestern, which is perfect in its opening two Big Ten games with impressive victories over Penn State and Wisconsin. Could the Wildcats be the Cinderella of the conference? It sure is looking that way.

Following *Huskers Illustrated* recaps Week Five of football happenings around the Big Ten.

EAST DIVISION INDIANA HOOSIERS

The Hoosiers got back on the winning track with a nonconference home victory over North Texas.

IU scored three first-quarter touchdowns and cruised from then on. It also scored three touchdowns in the third quarter.

Quarterback Nate Sudfeld bounced back from a sub-par performance the week before against Maryland by throwing for 230 yards and three touchdowns. He completed 23-of-29 passes.

Running back Tevin Coleman entered the day with the nation's longest active streaks for 100-yard games and consecutive games with a touchdown and continued those streaks. He gained 150 yards on the ground, his seventh-straight 100-yard game, and scored on a one-yard run to run his school-record to 14 straight games with a TD.

MARYLAND TERRAPINS

Maryland's Big Ten home opener was spoiled by Ohio State in front of the first sellout crowd the Terrapins had in nearly six years.

After leaving the IU game a week earlier with a sprained left wrist, Maryland

EAST DIVISION

2014 Standings

Team	Overall	Conference
Ohio State	4-1	1-0
Michigan State	4-1	1-0
Maryland	4-2	1-1
Rutgers	5-1	1-1
Penn State	4-1	1-1
Indiana	3-2	0-1
Michigan	2-4	0-2

WEST DIVISION

Team	Overall	Conference
Northwestern	3-2	2-0
Iowa	4-1	1-0
Minnesota	4-1	1-0
Nebraska	5-1	1-1
Purdue	3-3	1-1
Wisconsin	3-2	0-1
Illinois	3-3	0-2

Oct. 4 Results

Michigan State 27, Nebraska 22
 Ohio State 52, Maryland 24
 Purdue 38, Illinois 27
 Indiana 49, North Texas 24
 Northwestern 20, Wisconsin 14
 Rutgers 26, Michigan 24
 IDLE: Penn State, Iowa, Minnesota

Oct. 11 Games

Illinois @ Wisconsin, 11 a.m.
 Indiana @ Iowa, 11 a.m.
 Northwestern @ Minnesota, 11 a.m.
 Michigan State @ Purdue, 3:30 p.m.
 Penn State @ Michigan, 6 p.m.
 IDLE: Nebraska, Maryland, Rutgers, Ohio State

Oct. 18 Games

Northwestern @ Nebraska, 6:30 p.m.
 Iowa @ Maryland, 11 a.m.
 Purdue @ Minnesota, 11 a.m.
 Michigan State @ Indiana, 3:30 p.m.
 Rutgers @ Ohio State, 3:30 p.m.
 IDLE: Michigan, Illinois, Penn State, Wisconsin

All times CT



BIG TEN



quarterback C.J. Brown started against the Buckeyes. Brown was constantly under pressure and was sacked three times. He managed to throw for only 71 yards and was intercepted once.

In the second half, Brown was benched in favor of Caleb Rowe, but Maryland coach Randy Edsall said there's no quarterback controversy.

"C.J.'s our quarterback," he said.

Rowe was intercepted three times.

Maryland's rushing attack did very little against OSU, gaining a mere 66 yards on the ground.

MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

The Spartans looked like they were in complete control against the visiting Cornhuskers, but had to hang on to avoid what would've been a disastrous loss.

MSU allowed 19 fourth-quarter points.

"We got it done," Spartan coach Mark Dantonio said. "We found a way to win."

That they did and everyone throughout the country could probably hear the collective sigh of relief being let out by the Green and White faithful.

MICHIGAN WOLVERINES

For the first time since 1967, Michigan is 0-2 in Big Ten play and Hoke's days definitely seem numbered.

The Wolverines' defense allowed nearly 500 yards to Rutgers.

Devin Gardner started at quarterback for Michigan. He ran for a couple of touchdowns and 178 yards, but was intercepted once.

RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS

Rutgers posted its first Big Ten win by beating Michigan at home in thrilling fashion and its fans celebrated by spilling out onto the field after the game.

The Scarlet Knights got a terrific performance from quarterback Gary Nova. He was 22-of-39 passing for 404 yards with three touchdowns and no interceptions.

Rutgers preserved the victory by blocking a 55-yard field goal attempt by Michigan with 3:01 to play in the fourth

quarter and was then able to run out the clock.

OHIO STATE BUCKEYES

Buckeye quarterback J.T. Barrett looked like a seasoned veteran instead of a first-year starter at Maryland.

He threw for four touchdowns and 267 yards, completing 18-of-23 passes, and ran for a score.

"He's playing very well," said Ohio State coach Urban Meyer of Barrett. "And the neat thing is, we can still get better."

Meyer's team took a 31-10 halftime lead by scoring on five drives, none of which lasted more than 3:27.

PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

Penn State enjoyed a bye week after its stunning home loss to Northwestern.

During the off week, Coach James Franklin got some publicity for taking a helicopter ride to a Maryland high school football game.

Some say it was a waste of resources while others say it was a show of power by the coach who is assembling quite a recruiting class.

The Nittany Lions currently have the sixth-ranked recruiting class in the country in 2015 and might top that the year after.

Franklin isn't afraid to spend money when it comes to recruiting.

ESPN reported that he had a \$941,000 recruiting budget in 2010 and increased it to \$1.5 million in 2013.

WEST DIVISION

ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI

The Illini suffered a crushing defeat at home to Purdue.

Illinois' defense gave up a ton of yards on the ground and gave up big play after big play.

Purdue scored on an 80-yard touchdown pass, and had plays of 62, 54 and 53 yards.

The Illini D allowed 551 total yards.

Illinois quarterback Wes Lunt returned to the starting lineup, but was noticeably hobbled throughout and actually left the game in the fourth quarter

and didn't return.

IOWA HAWKEYES

The Hawkeyes have had a week off since their road victory against Purdue and to get ready for visiting Indiana.

During the week, Iowa has been mulling over its quarterback situation.

Against the Boilermakers, the Hawkeyes got off to an ugly start offensively as quarterback C.J. Beathard threw a 39-yard interception that was returned for a touchdown. That turnover was followed by some dropped passes.

Iowa did announce it will rely on a dual-quarterback system.

Quarterback Jake Rudock's hip seems to be healing as he's now about 80 percent.

He and Beathard are expected to play against the Hoosiers.

Defensively though Iowa has impressed and that's a big reason why it is 4-1.

Coach Kirk Ferentz credits his defensive play to a steady rotation of fresh players as the reason for success.

MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

The Gophers had an extra week to enjoy their road win against Michigan as they enjoyed a bye.

But everything wasn't all positive on the Minneapolis campus.

The university was blasted for forcing hockey fans to buy football tickets.

A Yahoo! Sports article said season tickets to Gopher men's hockey games were bundled with season tickets to football games.

Minnesota sells under 5,000 student season tickets per football season, but fans were forced to buy a \$175 bundle that included both hockey and football tickets instead of just paying \$99 for student hockey tickets.

As a result, hockey games are sold out. Gopher football games aren't, but that's not a surprise on the hockey-mad campus.

NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS

The Wildcat defense forced four turnovers and held Wisconsin quarterbacks

How Nebraska's 2014 Opponents Fared?



FLORIDA ATLANTIC
Result: L, Florida Internat. 38-10
Up Next: Western Kentucky
Current Record: 2-4



MCNEESE STATE
Result: W, Nicholls 45-3
Up Next: Sam Houston State
Record: 3-1



FRESNO STATE
Result: W, San Diego State 24-13
Up Next: UNLV
Record: 3-3



MIAMI
Result: L, Georgia Tech 28-17
Up Next: Cincinnati
Record: 3-3



ILLINOIS
Result: L, Purdue 38-27
Up Next: Wisconsin
Current Record: 3-3



MICHIGAN STATE
Result: W, Nebraska 27-22
Up Next: Purdue
Record: 4-1



NORTHWESTERN
Result: W, Wisconsin 20-14
Up Next: Minnesota
Record: 3-2



RUTGERS
Result: W, Michigan 26-24
Up Next: Ohio State
Record: 5-1



PURDUE
Result: W, Illinois 38-27
Up Next: Michigan State
Current Record: 3-3



WISCONSIN
Result: L, Northwestern 20-14
Up Next: Illinois
Record: 3-2



MINNESOTA
Result: W, Michigan 24-7
Up Next: Northwestern
Record: 4-1



IOWA
Result: W, Purdue 24-10
Up Next: Indiana
Record: 4-1

WEST



to just 12-of-29 through the air for 138 yards in notching another surprising victory.

Also, key in the win over the visiting Badgers was the play Northwestern got from its specialists.

NU kicked a pair of short field goals and punter Chris Gradone really did a good job of pinning Wisconsin back deep in its territory winning the ever-important battle for field position.

PURDUE BOILERMAKERS

For the first time in the Darrell Hazell era, the Boilermakers won a Big Ten game.

The victory at Illinois snapped a nine-game Big Ten losing streak for Purdue.

It was the Boilermakers' ground game that paved the way. They rushed for 349 yards, which greatly helped first-time starting quarterback Austin Appleby's cause.

BIG TEN



Appleby threw for a score and ran for two more. He was 15-of-20 passing for 202 yards, and ran for 76 yards on seven carries.

Running back Akeem Hunt rushed for 177 yards and a TD.

WISCONSIN BADGERS

Wisconsin got great production from running back Melvin Gordon, but that was it against Northwestern.

Gordon rushed for a career-high 259 yards and a touchdown.

The problem for the Badgers was they only got 138 yards from their passing game.

Tanner McEvoy started at quarterback for Wisconsin, but he was replaced by Joel Stave after McEvoy completed just 4-of-10 passes for 24 yards. Stave completed 8-of-19 aerials for 114 yards, including a touchdown, but was intercepted three times.



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Huskers Illustrated's Projected Nebraska Depth Chart

P/Holder

Sam Foltz
Johnny Stanton

LS

Josh Faulkenberry
Paul Kelly

CB

Daniel Davie
Jonathan Rose

WDE

Randy Gregory
Jack Gangwish

DEFENSE

FS

Nate Gerry
Zach Stovall

SS

Corey Cooper
Anthony Ridder

NICKEL

Byerson Cockrell
Josh Kalu

PR

De'Mornay Pierson-El
Kenny Bell

WILL

Zaire Anderson
Courtney Love

MIKE

Trevor Roach
Josh Banderas

BUCK

David Santos
Austin Williams

CB

Josh Mitchell
Chris Jones

WRX

Kenny Bell
Lane Hovey

LT

Alex Lewis
David Knevel

LG

Jake Cotton
Chongo Kondolo

C

Mark Pelini
Givens Price

RG

Mike Moudy
Givens Price

RT

Zach Sterup
Givens Price

TE

Cethan Carter
Sam Cotton

WRZ

Alonzo Moore
Taariq Allen

WRA

Jordan Westerkamp
Lane Hovey

QB

Tommy Armstrong Jr.
Ryker Fyfe

IB

Ameer Abdullah
Imani Cross

KR

Kenny Bell
Alonzo Moore

KOS

Drew Brown
Spencer Lindsay

PK

Drew Brown
Spencer Lindsay

OFFENSE

FB

Andy Janovich
Mitch McCann



Last Week, Season

Darren Ivy
(3-4, 18-24)

Mike Schaefer
(5-2, 30-12)

Michael Bruntz
(2-5, 24-18)

Bob Hamar
(3-4, 23-19)

Terry Douglass
(4-3, 25-17)

Doug Griffiths
(4-3, 26-16)

Lanny Holstein
(3-4, 27-15)

Nebraska vs Northwestern	NU 31-21	NU 42-20	NU 31-21	NU 45-17	NU 34-27	NU 31-14	NU 41-16
Florida State vs. Notre Dame	Florida State	Notre Dame	Florida State				
Texas A&M vs. Alabama	Alabama	Texas A&M	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama
Oklahoma vs. Kansas State	Oklahoma	KSU	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma	Oklahoma
Rutgers vs. Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State
Arkansas vs. Georgia	Georgia	Georgia	Arkansas	Arkansas	Georgia	Georgia	Arkansas
Iowa vs. Maryland	Iowa	Maryland	Maryland	Iowa	Iowa	Maryland	Maryland



NORTHEAST OMAHA

53 miles

Nelson's patience pays off with game carries



LATE IN NEBRASKA'S 45-14 WIN OVER ILLINOIS, RUNNING BACK'S COACH RON BROWN SIGNALED TO HIS FOURTH STRING RUNNING BACK. JORDAN NELSON HAD BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT HIS ENTIRE LIFE.

"My heart started pounding when they told me to get in," the walk-on running back said. "Coach Brown told me, and I was like 'yes.' I just went straight for it, just see the play and run."

Nelson, a lifelong Husker fan and Omaha Burke graduate, took the reigns and ran for 35 yards on his five carries – good for a respectable 7.0 yards per carry. The seldom-used redshirt sophomore got back into the swing of things after running for 1,791 yards and 13 touchdowns his senior year of high school.

"It was a great feeling that I haven't felt in a long time, playing scout team for the first two years here," Nelson said. "I was glad to see some of my work paid off. Sitting out for two years, you kind of get frustrated."

Nelson's father, Ray Nelson, played wingback for the Huskers in the early 80s as a walk-on as well, and his experiences helped the younger Nelson cope with being thrown to the bottom of the depth chart early in his career.

"It kind of gets hard, and sometimes I doubt myself and my abilities, but my dad told me that this is what he went through and other players went through as well," Nelson said. "I know I can do it, if they can do it."

The running back's mom also played a big role in her son's first two years as a Husker. She's a big reason Nelson was ready to take those carries against the Illini.

"My mom texts me every single day saying, 'Don't

worry about it. You will get your chance,'" Nelson said. "My dad didn't get to play at all his first two years, so just having he and my mom there helped."

Through those first couple seasons Nelson didn't really have a defined role on the Nebraska roster. He swung back and forth from running back to receiver wherever the team needed to add depth. During his redshirt season in 2012, he actually spent more time catching passes than running through holes.

"I think it's depth-wise," Nelson said. "Sometimes receivers run low on depth, but I was at the A position, which is Westy (Jordan Westerkamp) and (De'Mornay) Pierson-El, so they have depth this year. (The coaches) also felt like I was more consistent at running back sophomore year."

He looks more like a running back to the naked eye. Standing at 5-foot-7 and 180 pounds, it's hard to imagine Nelson dominating defensive backs with his body positioning or ball skills, but as a running back, he can hide behind the offensive line and squirt through a hole.

"De'Mornay (Pierson-El) is about my same height and he's making it work," Nelson laughed. "But playing receiver is definitely more difficult for me than it was in high school."

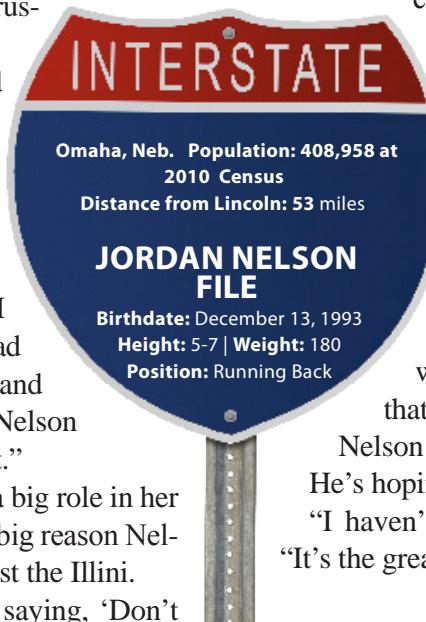
He wants to keep things simple, in his comfort zone, and under control this year. At the running back spot, the Omaha kid feels like he has a chance to rile up the fans back home.

"After the game, my phone blew up. I had a lot of support from people back in Omaha at my high school, and there were people from out of state telling me that I was on TV and that I had a great game," Nelson said.

He's hoping to do that again soon.

"I haven't come down from it yet," Nelson said. "It's the greatest feeling ever."

~ Story by Lanny Holstein



Jordan Nelson carries
the ball against Illinois.



Joe Mixan/Huskers Illustrated

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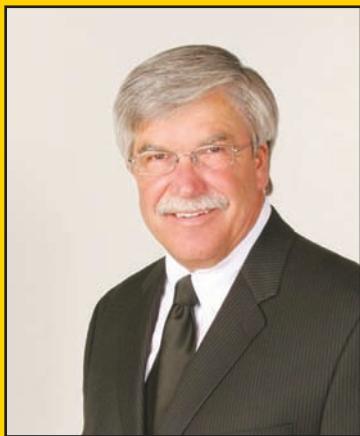
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MLS.

Catching up with **TONY DAVIS**

Running Back 1973-75

By Butch Rasmussen/Huskers Illustrated

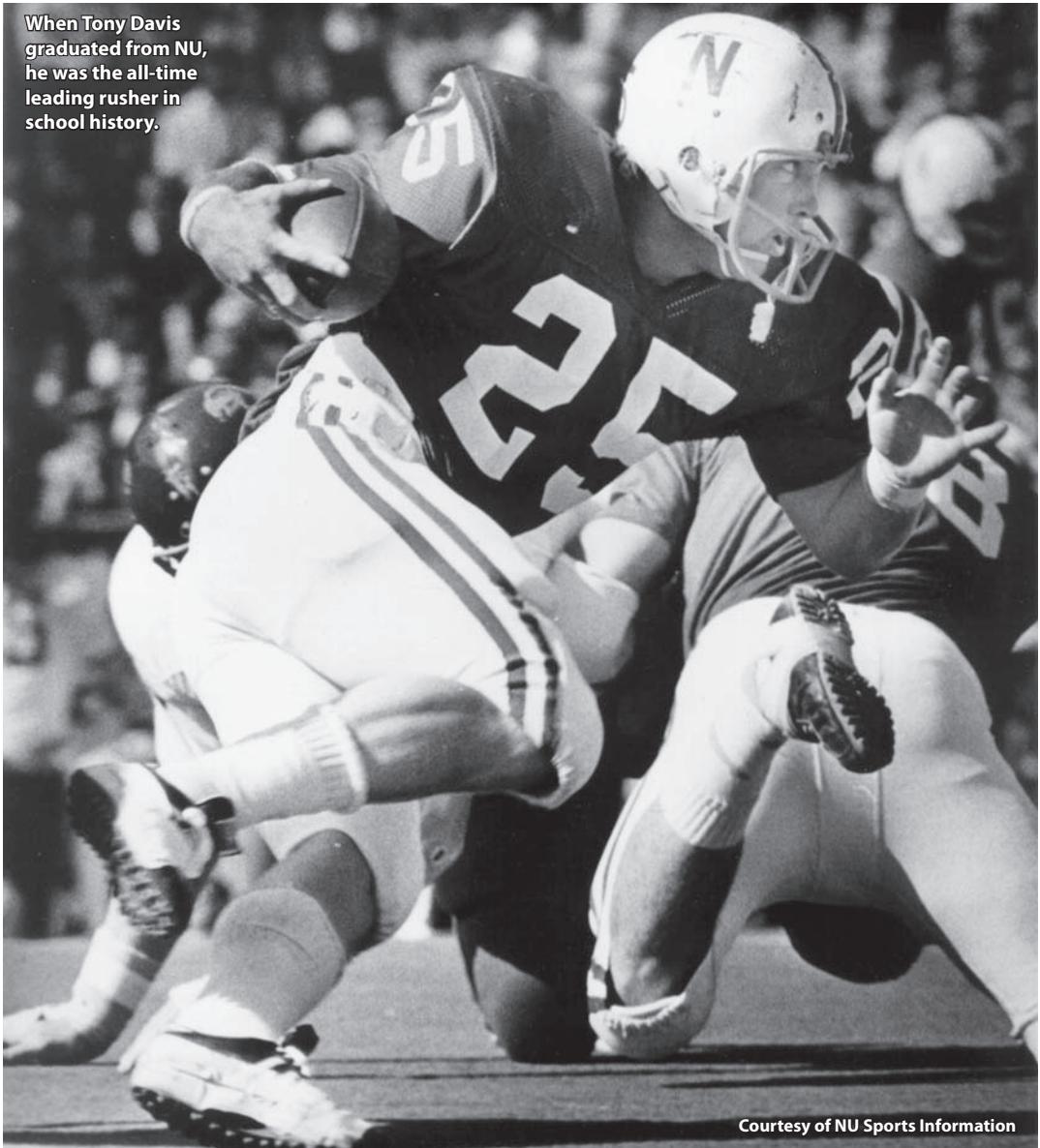
“Tough Tony” ran hard and tough as a full-back and an I-back for the Cornhuskers from 1973-75. Credit him with 22 career Husker touchdowns and MVP honors in two of the three bowl games he played in for the Huskers.

He was born Michael Davis in Tecumseh, Nebraska and for some reason his brothers renamed him “Tough Tony” and to this day that’s who he is.

“I was the youngest of six... was called Tony all my life by my two brothers and three sisters and when I was about 13 I ask them all why they called me Tough Tony and got 5 different answers,” Tony said.

Today Davis is Business Development Director for SGS Industrial Services, a Global Company having operations in every continent in the World. They inspect Oil/Gas Field Operations to insure safety for people and product.

When Tony Davis graduated from NU, he was the all-time leading rusher in school history.



Courtesy of NU Sports Information

As an ex-husker Tony played six years in the NFL and a year in the USFL before taking an offer from Tom Osborne to become Director of Computer Operations at Nebraska for seven years. Then off to Colorado to raise his family with wife Lori Krizman, a North

Platte gal. He says his years as a Cornhusker athlete were a dream come true.

Tony’s most memorable game was his first as a sophomore starter at I-back in 1973. It was Coach Osborne’s first game as a head coach against pre-season number one UCLA

– final score: Nebraska 40, Bruins 13. Davis had two touchdowns, one for 43 yards, was the game’s yardage leader with 147 and was named national back of the week by the *Associated Press*. Yeah, that’s a memorable game.

And then there was the 1974

Cotton Bowl versus Texas – Huskers 19, Longhorns 3. Davis rushed for 106 yards to lead all ball carriers and earned honors as most outstanding offensive player of the game.

And don't forget the 1975 Sugar Bowl against Florida – Huskers 13, Gators 10. Davis finished with 126 yards on 17 totes and was named the most valuable player.

Davis claims a great fondness for full-back Maury Damkroger who paved the way for many of Davis's spectacular jaunts downfield.

He has one record that will likely never be broken. He was MVP in the Jan. 1, 1974 Cotton Bowl and most valuable again in the Sugar Bowl game on New Years Eve still in 1974. MVP of two of the four major bowls in the same calendar year. "Pretty cool, huh?" Davis asks. Yep, pretty cool, Tony.

Tony's 22 career touchdowns was a productive career.

"I was the starting I-back as a sopho-

more and was surrounded by great teammates who allowed me to be successful," he replied.

Davis had scholarship offers from over 20 Division 1 schools including Oklahoma, Notre Dame and USC but just never considered any but Nebraska.

On the field Tony carried the reputation of a high school All-Stater and high school All-American from his days at Tecumseh, Nebraska High School. All-State Football, Second team All-State Basketball and a State Qualifier in track as a hurdler. He was a catcher on his Legion State Qualifying Baseball team.

As a sophomore I-back Tony ran for 1,114 yards. It was Tom Osborne's first year as the head coach. Tony became only the third Nebraska player to rush for over 1,000 yards in a season joining Bobby Reynolds in 1950 and Jeff Kinney in 1971.

Davis closed his career as Nebraska's all-time leading rusher, with 2,445 career rushing yards, topping the old mark of

2,420 by Kinney from 1969-71.

Tony went on to play six years in the NFL for the Cincinnati Bengals and the Tampa Bay Bucs and scored a total of six NFL touchdowns.

It was in Cincinnati where he had joined the local golf club that he received a message from the club pro that one of their members wanted to play golf with him since he was a Bengals player. Tony agreed and the guy approached, shook Tony's hand and said "Hi, I'm Neil Armstrong".

You're who? It was Neil Armstrong, the first moon walker.

"We became friends and played together for the next three years with him playing in some tourney's I supported and me playing in some of his," Tony said. "After my career was over I met Neil in Omaha for a Golf Tourney and he played with Coach Devaney. Neil was a very generous man with his time and friends and it was a sad day when this country lost him", he said. Armstrong died in August 2012.

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Lobedas continue to live life “In the Red”

By Tory Duncan

Special to Huskers Illustrated

When you catch Jerry and Arlene Lobeda at home, or out in one of the many communities they frequent on a weekly basis, you will find words of wisdom about anything from life to Nebraska athletics.

If you are really lucky, you will have a chance to sit down with a couple that lives life on the run, keeping busy and enjoying every moment of it.

The Lobedas, who reside just south of Ong in Clay County, prove to be a unique couple that, in the words of Jerry, “live life.”

“I’ve always likened life to being on the go,” said this 1944 Ong High School graduate.

“If you rest, you rust,” said Jerry.

You won’t find an ounce of rust on this couple who celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary in August.

For the Lobedas, life together started on August 16, 1953. But for each of them, life began much before the day in which they joined in marriage.

Arlene, a 1952 Edgar High School graduate, and Jerry, like many youngsters of their youth, met when Jerry and his best life-long friend, Loren Urbauer, attended a dance in Edgar.

That moment proved to be the spark that brought this bubbly, happy couple together.

Their marriage brought four children into their lives: Rob, of Lincoln; Rick, of Grand Island; Bradley, of Colorado; and Lori, of Bridgeport.

Their marriage also took the Lobeda family away from Clay County and life the way they knew it while growing up.

Both grew up in farming families and seemingly were destined to remain on the farm after their wedding, but Jerry took a position with the railroad where he would be a railway mail carrier

Arlene and Jerry Lobeda of Ong pose for a shot before the Illinois game. Jerry has volunteered for 46 years at Huskers football games. They can usually be found at Gate 8 with smiles on their faces.



Jimmy Rash/Huskers Illustrated

for 11 years.

Ten of those years of service Jerry delivered mail along what is now the Burlington-Northern rail line that goes through Clay County, from Omaha to Denver.

“The passenger trains began fading away and ultimately it took away the railway mail delivery service as well,” said Jerry.

Their 11 years of life in Omaha changed when the Lobedas moved to Lincoln, a city they would call home for the next 27 years. Their children all graduated from Lincoln Northeast High School.

In Lincoln, the Lobedas began their first years of service with the University of Nebraska’s Event Center staff.

Jerry began service at Husker football games, attending Gate 8

in Memorial Stadium, a gate that he still attends to this day.

“I worked Gate 10 one year while the stadium was undergoing construction changes, but since that first game in 1967, I’ve primarily worked Gate 8.”

Arlene would always go to games while her husband worked the crowds, but it wasn’t until 1976 that she would begin her own service to the UNL Events.

It was Arlene that proved to be a motherly type to many members of the Husker basketball team, as it was her job in the early going to sit with the team when Events Staff coordinator Butch Hugg asked her one time to fill in as the bench assistant to the Husker players.

“I figured I would work just the one game, or a couple of

games, but the next week, Mr. Hugg still had me on the payroll and I have been working Husker basketball games along with Jerry since then.

This energetic couple continue to work Husker football games and Husker baseball games, as well. With the introduction of the new Pinnacle Arena, however, the Lobedas final year of Husker basketball games came and went this past season, as the City of Lincoln will hire and staff the newly constructed arena.

Their love of Husker athletics for both Jerry and Arlene goes way beyond just being able to attend games. In fact, it doesn’t ever seem like work to either of them.

“We’ve been so blessed through the years in getting to know some wonderful kids, some amazing people and their families, so for us to term this as work for us, it just doesn’t seem like a job,” said Arlene.

In 1996, the Lobedas were spurred by a drive to save Jerry’s family farm where he was raised, and it brought the couple back to Ong.

“I just couldn’t handle the fact that, when my mother went to the home, I would have to see my childhood home just bulldozed over.”

Jerry and Arlene’s love for each other is visible. You see them following local high school games when they aren’t traveling to Lincoln for a Husker event.

“The teams at each of the schools around here since we’ve returned are just a breath of fresh air compared to today’s college games. Don’t get me wrong, we love watching the college events, if we didn’t, we wouldn’t keep going,” said Jerry.

He adds, “The college game has changed so much since we first started working Husker events. It’s more commercialized and specialized, but it is still very entertaining for us.”

Oct. 12, 1963

Fritz Greenlee's 38-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Terry Isaacson with 2:41 to play gave Air Force a 17-13 upset victory, handing Nebraska its only loss of the season. Trailing 7-0 at halftime, the Cornhuskers tied the score at 7-7 on Rudy Johnson's 76-yard scoring run and later pulled ahead 13-10 on Bruce Smith's 2-yard TD run in the third quarter. The crowd of 38,000 was the largest a Memorial Stadium in eight years.

Oct. 13, 1979

Leading 15-0 at halftime, No. 5-ranked Nebraska erupted for 27 third-quarter points on its way to a 42-0 homecoming victory over Kansas. I-back Jarvis Redwine led the Huskers with 157 yards rushing, despite playing sparingly in the second half, but Craig Johnson picked up the slack for NU. Johnson ran for 138 yards and two TDs on just nine carries, including a 94-yard scoring run on the final play of the third quarter. Dan Pensick paced the Blackshirts with seven tackles, including two tackles for loss.

Oct. 14, 1989

No. 4-ranked Nebraska controlled the game from start to finish, posting a 50-7 road victory over Missouri at Columbia. I-back Ken Clark (17 carries for 125 yards) and quarterback Gerry Gdowski (12 carries for 122 yards) both topped the 100-yard mark in rushing for the Huskers, who led 26-0 after the first quarter thanks in part to Mike Croel's blocked punt for a safety. Reggie Cooper's recovery of another blocked punt in the end zone for a TD.

Oct. 15, 1994

With starting quarterback Tommie Frazier out for the regular season due to blood clots in his leg and backup signal-caller Brook Berringer sidelined by a rib injury, No. 2 Nebraska started sophomore walk-on quarterback Matt Turman, who was able to help NU grind out a 17-6 road victory at No. 16 Kansas State.

The Huskers leaned heavily on their defense, which limited the Wildcats to minus-7 yards rushing on 23 attempts. K-State quarterback Chad May was responsible for nearly all of his team's offensive production, completing 22-of-48 pass attempts for 249 yards with one interception. He was sacked six times. May had thrown for a Big Eight-record 489 yards against Nebraska in 1993.

"Our secondary really played outstanding because they have got a great quarterback," Nebraska defensive coordinator Charlie McBride said in an *Associated Press* interview. "If you would have

told me we'd hold them to six points, I wouldn't have believed you. I heard some guy in the hotel say last night that we were OK, but that our only problem was the secondary. Well, today it wasn't."

Despite a hand injury, I-back Lawrence Phillips rushed 31 times for 126 yards to lead Nebraska. The Huskers led just 7-6 until Jeff Makovicka's 15-yard TD run with 11:01 to play.

"We have the best offensive line in the nation," Makovicka said. "There's a feeling at Nebraska that if we stay in the game until the fourth quarter, we're going to win. I had that feeling on the sidelines today."

Of Nebraska's performance, *New York Times* columnist William C. Rhoden wrote: "After a week of sunny skies and cheerful optimism, Kansas State was pummeled into a deep, purple funk this afternoon by a Nebraska team that, among other things, seemed irritated by the Wildcats' pesky pre-game demeanor. ... On a day of dark clouds and intermittent rain, the Wildcats' high-flying offense, led by quarterback Chad May, was shut down by a Nebraska defense that blitzed, harried and manhandled May into one of the poorest days of his career."

Oct. 16, 2004

Sophomore quarterback Joe Daily passed for a Nebraska single-game record 342 yards as the Huskers routed Baylor 59-27 at Memorial Stadium. Daily, who completed 13-of-20 pass attempts, also tied the school mark with five TD throws. The old NU single-game passing record was 297 yards set by David Humm in 1973.

Oct. 17, 2009

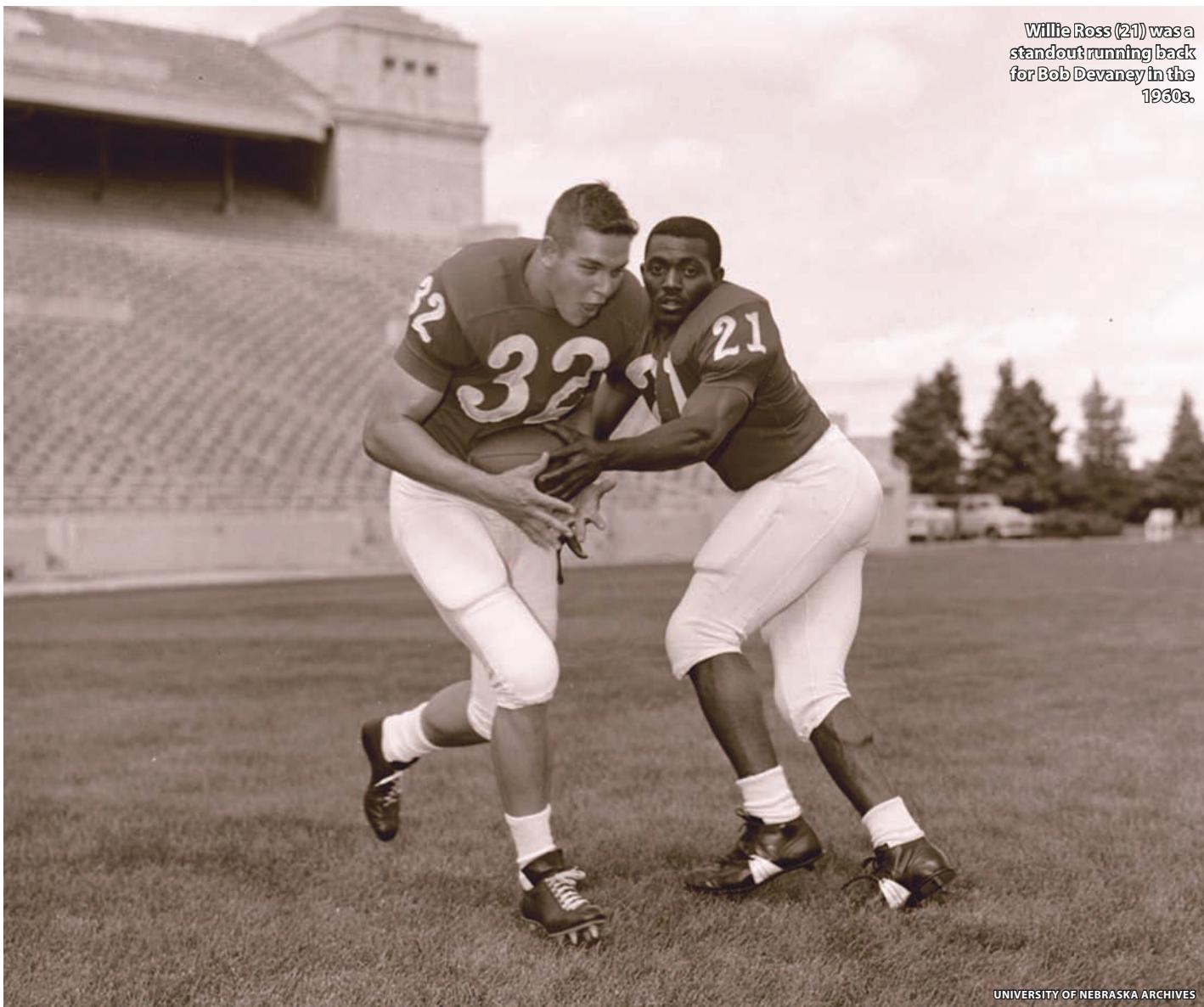
A key turnover and the passing of quarterback Steven Sheffield helped Texas Tech to a 24-3 halftime lead as the Red Raiders posted a 31-10 upset victory over No. 15 Nebraska at Memorial Stadium. Already leading 7-0, TTU's Daniel Howard returned a fumble 82 yards for a score and Sheffield finished 23-of-32 passing for 234 yards. The Huskers finished with 285 total yards, including just 70 yards rushing.

Oct. 18, 2008

Nebraska gave first-year head coach Bo Pelini his first Big 12 Conference victory with a 35-7 road win over Iowa State in Ames, outgaining the Cyclones 548-218 in total offense. Marlon Lucky had two second-quarter rushing TDs and quarterback Joe Ganz was 27-of-37 through the air for 328 yards, including eight passes to wide receiver Nate Swift for 112 yards.

IN THE RedZone

Willie Ross highlights Arkansas Cornhuskers



Willie Ross (21) was a standout running back for Bob Devaney in the 1960s.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA ARCHIVES

By Kalani Simpson

Huskers Illustrated

You may or may not have done well in geography in school, but now we're giving you another chance. Husker geography. That's right – this is the perfect subject for tailgate arguments, bar bets or radio drive-time talk shows (you're welcome).

It's time to answer that age-old question: Who is the best all-time Husker from each state? In the last issue,

Husker Geography
Part 20

Huskers Illustrated looked at the best players to come out of Iowa.

This week we move on to Arkansas, Louisiana, West Virginia, Vermont and International.

ARKANSAS

Willie Ross

HB/WB, 1961-63

Scored a 92-yard kickoff return touchdown in the Gotham Bowl. He was in the thick of it when Bob Devaney first made the Huskers great.

Demoine Adams

Rush End, 1999-2002

A Lifter of the Year. Hard worker, good player, good guy.

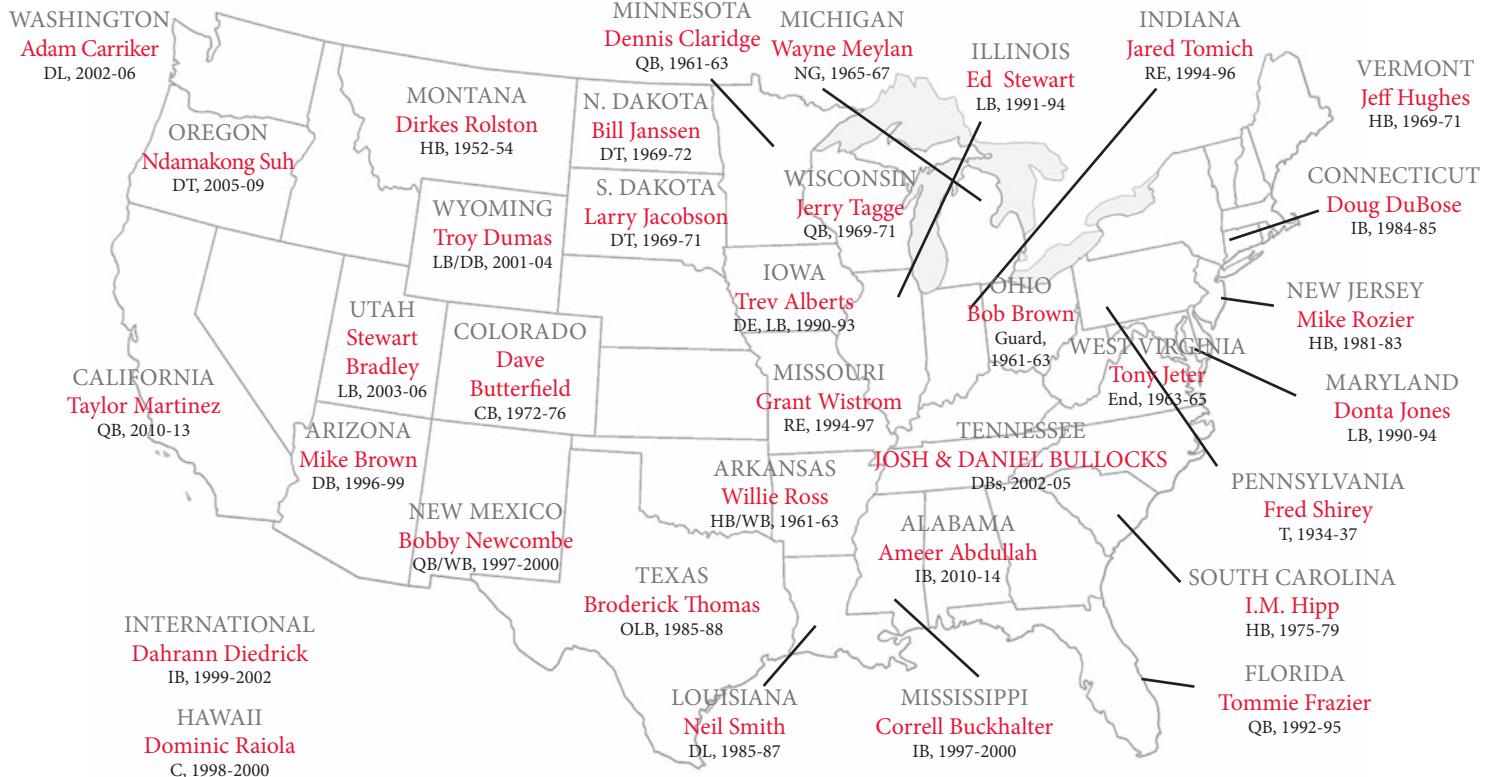
WEST VIRGINIA

Tony Jeter

End, 1963-65

Another stud from those early Devaney teams, Jeter was also the first African American academic All-American at Nebraska. He was an ironman who started 33 consecutive games – when he was slowed by injuries

All-Time Greatest Huskers From Each State



he just played offense instead of playing both ways, as he did occasionally. He was a standout performer in the 1964 and '66 Orange Bowls, a two-time All-Big 8 performer and the major wires named him second-team All-American in 1965 (TV Guide's American Coaches Association team had him on its first-team).

VERMONT

Jeff Hughes
HB, 1969-71

Jeff Hughes was a letterman on two national-championship teams. Hughes didn't get many carries on those great teams, but he averaged more than seven yards a rush his senior year. A good "locker room guy" whom Bob Devaney trusted to keep the team loose.

LOUISIANA

Neil Smith
DL, 1985-87

Nebraska made him grow up, Nebraska helped turn him into a man, Neil Smith has said again and again.

In Lincoln, under the direction of Tom

Osborne, Charlie McBride, Boyd Epley and others, Smith became great. When we think of him, we think "physical freak." But, no. He worked his way up. Before he was an All American, he was Lifter of the Year.

He played on the freshman team, then was a backup as a sophomore, then rotated as a junior. Then senior year, when he became one of the best defensive linemen the Huskers have ever had. He dominated the last game he ever played, then was the second pick in the pro draft. In Kansas City he was a star. But it hadn't been easy.

First, he'd had to become a man.

LeRoy Etienne

LB, 1985-88

Big-time recruit who played right away, in an era when that wasn't done often. Hard hitting linebacker who could run and played big in big games.

Tyrone Hughes

WB/KR, 1989-92

Terrific kick returner for Nebraska, who was

just as productive for the NFL's Saints.

Reggie Cooper

DB, 1987-90

Three-year starter, a captain, a tackling machine.

INTERNATIONAL

Dahrann Diedrick
IB, Canada, 1999-2002

He led the Big 12 in rushing and was first-team all-conference in 2001.

Seung Hoon Choi

G, South Korea, 2008-12

In your program, his hometown is officially listed as Lincoln, as he graduated from Lincoln Christian. But Choi was born and raised in South Korea, and arrived in Nebraska barely speaking the language and having never heard of football.

He walked on and eventually became a starting guard.

As a senior, he started every game and blocked for two 1,000-yard rushers.

SWIMMING & DIVING

Despite victories from junior Alexandra Bilunas and sophomore Anna Filipcic, the Nebraska swimming and diving team dropped its first two conference battles of the season. Iowa beat Nebraska 191-109 and Michigan beat the team 182-112 this past Saturday.

Bilunas earned the Huskers' first victory of the day swimming to a time of 23.82 in the 50-yard freestyle. The Huskers swept the first two spots of the race with Taryn Collura finishing second behind Bilunas with a time of 23.84. Collura also raced to a second-place finish in the 100-yard freestyle for the Huskers.

Anna Filipcic captured her second victory of the meet in the three-meter dive and also earned a victory in the one-meter dive during the first session of the event on Friday.

In the relays, the Huskers earned a third-place and fifth place finish. The 400-yard free-style relay team of Collura, Bria Deveaux, Kelly Dunn and Katt Sickle raced to a third-place finish with a time of 3:32.51. The Huskers' 200-yard medley relay team of Jacqueline Juffer, Ehly, Deveaux and Collura captured a fifth-place finish with a time of 1:46.47.

The Huskers return to the pool at the end of the week for their regular-season home opener against Nebraska-Omaha.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Senior Mayme Conroy put Nebraska up 1-0 early, but Michigan's Nicky Waldeck earned a hat trick to lead the Wolverines to a 3-1 win this past Thursday.

Conroy's goal came in the eighth minute, as she rebounded Katie Kraeutner's blocked shot and shot it to the bottom right corner of the net. Conroy, the



MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

Freshman midfielder Sami Reinhard dribbles against Butler earlier this season.

Big Ten Offensive Player of the Week, continued where she left off a couple weeks ago. She has four goals in her last three games.

Despite the loss, the Huskers did outshoot the Wolverines 13-10, with Kraeutner leading the way at four attacks. Caroline Gray also had three shots, Jaycie Johnson took two and Caroline Flynn added one for NU.

Michigan's first goal came in the 31st minute, as Waldeck dribbled past Nebraska's keeper and tapped it in from three yards out off an assist from Ani Sarkisian. In the 42nd minute, Waldeck scored her second goal to give the Wolverines a 2-1 advantage heading into the locker room.

While the Huskers outshot Michigan 7-3 in the second half, the only goal came from Waldeck in the 65th minute. She received a pass five yards out on the right side and slipped it past the goalkeeper to the left side of the net.

Nebraska fell to 5-5-2 on the season with the loss, and holds a 1-3-2 record in the Big Ten.

BOWLING

The Nebraska women's bowling team was voted the No. 1 team in the nation by the National Tenpin Coaches Association (NTCA) this past week. NU received 11 of the 23 first-place votes in the poll (664 points), in front of second-place Arkansas State (four first-place votes, 613 total points).

Defending NCAA champion Sam Houston State was third with seven first place ballots (572 points), followed by Vanderbilt, which had the remaining first place vote and 542 points.

Nebraska Coach Bill Straub thanked the voters for their confidence in the team, but noted the team has a lot of work to do to get where they want to be, competing for their NCAA-leading fifth national championship.

Senior Liz Kuhlkin returns to the team after another dominating season a year ago. She earned her second NTCA First-Team All-American honors in 2014. Kuhlkin led the Huskers to a second-place finish at the 2014 NCAA Championships in Wickliffe, Ohio. She solidified the Huskers' first win of the

tournament with a total pinfall of 247. She also led the Huskers to a victory over top-ranked Arkansas State with a 237.

NU will open up the season at the Crusader Classic in Valparaiso, Ind., on Nov. 7-9.

RIFLE

Sophomore Lauren Phillips fired the highest smallbore score of the day in Nebraska's season debut against Air Force, but despite a that effort, the Huskers fell short against the Falcons 4,667-4,648.

In smallbore, Phillips shot a 585, followed by Denise Martin who tallied a 576. Air Force's David Higgins scored a 581, helping the Falcons take a seven-point lead after the first discipline.

Sophomore Jaycee Carter finished with a 592 in air rifle to try and help the Huskers come from behind, but it wasn't enough. Nebraska finished with a final air rifle score of 2,348.

The Huskers are back in action next weekend at the NU Rifle Range against Murray State on Friday.

Coaches Corner

*with Robin Krapfl
Head Women's Golf Coach*



Huskers Illustrated reporter Lanny Holstein recently visited with NU women's golf coach Robin Krapfl, who is in her 28th season as the head coach of the Huskers. Nebraska heads to the Pioneer Invitational in Denver, Colo.

HI: How do you determine who your five golfers are each week?

RK: It varies from tournament to tournament, depending on how much time we have in between. For the first one, we play five rounds and we take the five low scores over those five rounds, and that's our starting lineup. Then we play our tournament and the low two scores may be exempt. As the season progresses, they earn exemptions for what they do in tournaments. Basically, it's determined by what they do on the golf course."

HI: It sounds like you have a system in place, but is there ever a situation where you put a girl in the lineup just because you think she will play well?

RK: We try to avoid that situation, but we do always have the last spot as a coach's pick. Say our No. 1 player is sick and doesn't play well or qualify, say she has three big exams during the week and doesn't play as well as she normally plays, we reserve that option to use the coaches pick.

HI: How has the team played in the first three tournaments?

RK: I think we've done a lot of good things, but it's kind of exposed a weakness in our short game. We've put a renewed emphasis on that. You know, we always work really hard on our short game, but I think we've been going above and beyond in practice that last week or so.

HI: What is the next step for the team?

RK: We have to get them comfortable shooting really low scores. I mean, they are comfortable shooting good scores, 71, 72, 74, 75, and stuff like that, but they need to realize that they are capable of shooting under par and rounds in the 60s.

HI: You don't have a senior on the roster. Is that pretty rare?

RK: Yeah. It's a little unusual. We had one player in that class, and it just didn't work out. It wasn't the type of fit for Nebraska, so we let her go. We ended up having an open class there, but I think we have some great junior leaders who are doing a great job. It just gives us a little bit more flexibility in our recruiting. We did hold back some money for a 2015 kid that we are going to sign in the fall."

This Week



Husker Athletics

Friday, Oct. 10

Men's Tennis

USTA/ITA Central Regionals at Norman, Okla.

Volleyball

Michigan State at East Lansing, Mich. 7 p.m.

Rifle

Murray at Nebraska Rifle Range 8 a.m.

Women's Golf

Pioneer Invitational at Denver at 9:30 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 11

Men's Tennis

USTA/ITA Central Regionals at Norman, Okla.

Swimming

UNO at Devaney Natatorium. at 11 a.m.

Women's Golf

Pioneer Invitational at Denver at 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, Oct. 12

Men's Tennis

USTA/ITA Central Regionals at Norman, Okla.

Women's Golf

Pioneer Invitational at Denver at 9:30 a.m.

Rifle

Ole Miss at Nebraska Rifle Range 8 a.m.

Volleyball

Michigan at Ann Arbor, Mich. 12 p.m.

Softball

Creighton at Omaha 1 p.m and 3 p.m..

Monday, Oct. 13

Men's Golf

Bill Ross Intercollegiate at Overland Park, Kan.

Men's Tennis

USTA/ITA Central Regionals at Norman, Okla.

Tuesday, Oct. 14

Men's Golf

Bill Ross Intercollegiate at Overland Park, Kan.

Women's Softball



Second baseman Taylor Otte throws the ball to first base during the Huskers' game against South Dakota on Sept. 28 at Bowlin Stadium. NU lost the first game 2-1 in nine innings, but won the second game 6-5.

PHOTOS BY DARREN IVY/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



Junior pitcher
Emily Lockman
itches against
South Dakota.



Third basemen MJ Knighten fields
a ball against South Dakota and
gets the runner out at first base.

10 questions

with Kiki Stokes
Junior Softball Infielder



1 Where do you like to hit in the lineup?

KS: When I first got here, I was only comfortable being first because that's where I had always been for my whole life, but then I started to realize that college is a little different. I don't really care if I bat one in the lineup or wherever. It's really not about where you are, it's about how you perform.

3 Does your approach change depending on where you are hitting?

KS: I think I do. When I'm first, I think a little bit more about how I'm going to get on base, as opposed to sixth, how am I going to help the team in a certain situation.

4 What's the key to stealing bases?

KS: Being smart is the biggest thing with base running. Obviously, your speed is going to help, but it's how you slide into a base or how you read a ball in the dirt. I think all of that is important when it comes to base running. I haven't mastered that skill completely, but it's gotten a lot better since I first got here.

5 I've heard you have some alter-egos that come out for pep talks. Where do those come from?

KS: I have three of them. I am always messing around with Dawna Tyson. She and I always make up stupid voices and stuff, so freshman year right before regionals, I came up with the first one, and his name was "Coach Sungi." I had these sunglasses, and I just shortened it up to "Sungi." I talked in this deep voice, kind of like a surfer voice, I guess, so that was the first one. I just used him as a motivational talker to motivate the team, lighten up the mood.

7 What about the other two?

KS: When we got to the World Series, I made up a new one and his name was "Coach Oak" because I had some Oakley shades. He was also motivational, but he was related to "Sungi," so we made a little family thing. He repeated a lot of what "Sungi" would say. The third one was "Shawntasia." I was just messing around one day, and I started to get really ghetto, just making up funny jokes and stuff. I made up this ghetto black girl that puts on concerts for people and sings. That's how I got that one, and I ended up singing the national anthem with Kaylan Jablonski. She was actually singing, and I was pretending. Now there's this joke that "Shawntasia" sells out the Pinnacle Bank Arena and the Bourbon and stuff.

8 What do the coaches think when you go into your alter-egos?

KS: They die. I think Coach Revelle is on the verge of crying every time I do one of them. Coach Sippel and Coach Miller are the same. They are looking at me like, wow, is this really coming from Kiki. They think it's hilarious. Sometimes Coach Revelle will even ask for it.

9 How many NU games did you come to as a kid?

KS: Oh, yes. Alex Gordon is like my husband. I have to watch. That's like my future husband. I know he's married, but yeah, in my head. I stayed up all night last night just watching that game. (The interview was after the AL Wild Card Game) It had been 29 years since we had done something like that. I'm not a Chiefs fan, but I am a Royals fan.

It was great to see something like that.

2 Describe your style as a softball player?

KS: I would say confident. I try to carry some swag, but more so confidence, knowing that I can do whatever if I have the right mindset.

6 Would you consider yourself the fastest player on the team?

KS: Maybe not this year. This year we have so much talent, and so many girls that are fast on the team. I think I can beat them all in a footrace, but in certain drills, some people might be quicker side to side than me. Footrace-wise though, yeah, I think I have them all beat.

10 It seemed like you swung away more often last season and it worked for you.

Why did you switch to that approach?

KS: I had always wanted to work on hitting since I got here. I went from a righty to a lefty, but power was something that I loved on the right handed side, and I wanted to make sure that if I switched over being a lefty power hitter was something I could also do in addition to slapping. I think last year was my year to get comfortable with it, so now I'm going to be comfortable with both. This year I can mix it up more and read defenses.

As interviewed by Huskers Illustrated's Lanny Holstein

Melanie Keil makes transition from Berlin to Lincoln



Nebraska

Story By Bob Hamar • Photo by Joe Mixan

IT TAKES MANY COLLEGE FRESHMEN A WHILE TO ADJUST TO LIFE AWAY FROM HOME. JUST THINK IF “AWAY FROM HOME” MEANS ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CONTINENT.

That was what Nebraska middle blocker Melanie Keil

faced when she left her home in Berlin, Germany, to come to Lincoln to play college volleyball for the Huskers.

It certainly wasn't an easy transition for the 6-foot sophomore.

“The culture,” Keil said when asked what it was that made her homesick a year ago. “I can't really pinpoint

exactly what it is, because you would think the U.S. and Europe are kind of similar, but there are just some differences that were hard.”

Now Keil has gotten past those differences and has moved into the starting lineup for the Huskers. Nebraska coach John Cook isn't too surprised.

“Where she was at (in high school), they played a lot but they didn't get coached a lot, so she got away with a lot of bad habits,” Cook said. “Here at this level, you pay for those. That's been her biggest challenge, but she's a really hard worker and wants to be great.

“She's a competitor as well.”

2014 Nebraska Volleyball Schedule

Aug. 23, 2014	Red-White Game	Devaney Center	White 3-1
AVCA Showcase			
Aug. 29, 2014	Florida State	Devaney Center	L, 3-1 (0-1)
Aug. 31, 2014	Stanford	Devaney Center	L, 3-0 (0-2)
Flyer-Raider Invite			
Sept. 5, 2014	Dayton	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-0 (1-2)
Sept. 6, 2014	CSU-Bakersfield	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-1 (2-2)
Sept. 6, 2014	Eastern Kentucky	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-0 (3-2)
Ameritas Players	Challenge		
Sept. 12, 2014	Denver	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (4-2)
Sept. 13, 2014	Colgate	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (5-2)
Sept. 17, 2014	Creighton	Devaney Center	W, 3-1 (6-2)
Sept. 20, 2014	Texas	Devaney Center	L, 3-2 (6-3)
Sept. 24, 2014	Iowa *	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (7-3)
Sept. 27, 2014	Iowa *	Iowa City, Iowa	W, 3-0 (8-3)
Oct. 3, 2014	Penn State *	Devaney Center	W, 3-1 (9-3)
Oct. 4, 2014	Ohio State *	Devaney Center	L, 3-2 (9-4)
Oct. 10, 2014	Michigan State *	East Lansing, MI	TBA
Oct. 11, 2014	Michigan *	Ann Arbor, MI	TBA
Oct. 15, 2014	Northwestern *	Devaney Center	TBA
Oct. 18, 2014	Illinois *	Devaney Center	TBA
Oct. 22, 2014	Minnesota *	Minneapolis	TBA
Oct. 26, 2014	Wisconsin *	Madison, Wis.	TBA
Oct. 31, 2014	Rutgers *	Piscataway, N.J.	TBA
Nov. 1, 2014	Maryland *	College Park, Md.	TBA
Nov. 5, 2014	Purdue *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 8, 2014	Indiana *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 12, 2014	Michigan State *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 16, 2014	Maryland *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 19, 2014	Indiana *	Bloomington, Ind.	TBA
Nov. 22, 2014	Michigan *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 26, 2014	Illinois *	Champaign, Ill.	TBA
Nov. 29, 2014	Penn State *	State College	TBA
NCAA Tourney			
Dec. 4-6, 2014	TBD	College Sites	TBA
Dec. 13-14, 2014	TBD	Regional Sites	TBA
Dec. 18, 2014	TBD - Semifinals	Oklahoma City, OK	TBA
Dec. 20, 2014	Championship	Oklahoma City	6:35 p.m.

The key for Keil was to get better at blocking. It wasn't a strong part of her game coming into the college ranks.

"I just learned a whole different view of blocking, that you can actually scheme and have movements and different starting positions," Keil said. "I just kind of stood there and went up you know, and now

I like have a purpose in what I'm doing."

Her improvement in that area of the game helped her catch up with teammate and fellow middle blocker Cecilia Hall.

"I've been telling her the whole time she's been here, if she becomes a more disciplined blocker she'll be on the

court," Cook said. "Ceci has is a couple of years ahead of her understanding what we're trying to do. But she got her opportunity and has made the most of it."

Keil is really just feeling more comfortable all the way around.

"I think I improved on communication with my

teammates because last season I just had a hard time adjusting to

here," Keil said. "It was harder than I thought it would be. This year I could just concentrate on communicating with them and communicating with the coaches and just having fun."

The Huskers found out about Keil when they received film from her mother, who was trying to get some colleges interested in her daughter from Berlin.

"Her mom sent video of her to all the Big Ten schools," Cook said. "The school she was at, she wasn't getting recruited. Nobody would know about her. I know several schools recruited her. She visited and liked it."

Keil picked Nebraska out of a group of colleges that also included Big Ten rivals Illinois and Michigan. She made unofficial visits to all three before committing to the Huskers.

"That helped me a lot to decided because I knew what the college looked like," Keil said. "Because I didn't really know what to expect. Just through communication with the coaches and communication with players on the team, I just realized Nebraska would be the best fit for me."

After she committed to the Huskers, she made an official visit to Lincoln, just to make it official. Now Keil is just trying to get better.

That means going hard every day in practice.

Keil was hitting .403 as of Oct. 1 with 39 kills and just eight errors in 77 attacks.

"Any time you're hitting .400-something, you're low error," Cook said. "She's worked really hard. I think once she's gotten comfortable here with everything, this is what we expected from her when we recruited her."

NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL NOTEBOOK

Compiled by Bob Hamar • Photos by Joe Mixan

VOLLEYBALL LOVE AFFAIR

John Cook can't quite get over the connection between Nebraska fans and his Husker volleyball team. The Huskers are selling an average of 300 standing-room only tickets at each home match at the Devaney Center.

"I'm telling you, we're averaging probably 300 standing-room only tickets right now," Cook said. "That just blows me away. I think there is really a lot of interest. There are a lot of Nebraska kids that play. Next year, Kelly Hunter (Papillion-La Vista South). I just think Nebraska fans love this volleyball team, even though we lost to Texas and Stanford. I think they like them."

That's one example. Another came after the Huskers 3-0 sweep at Iowa on Sept. 27. That match started at 7 p.m. The Illinois-Nebraska football game at Memorial Stadium began at 8:12 p.m.

Cook and the team were just getting on the plane leaving Iowa City when he got a text from the sidelines at Memorial Stadium telling him the 3-0 sweep had just been announced and a huge cheer went up from the crowd.

"We got back to Lincoln, I had several texts," Cook said. "My kids were both at the game. They both told me when they got home from the football game."

It seemed as if the Huskers never lost at the NU Coliseum. That hasn't been the case at the Devaney Center, where they actually lost three straight matches to Texas to end the 2013 season, to open the 2014 season against Florida State and two days later to Stanford, which entered October undefeated and ranked No. 1 in the nation.

"I think the fans really like this team," Cook said. "I know they like Big Ten teams because of the football rivalries and all that. The Big Ten is fun. That's why we're in this conference and the fans love to see Big Ten matches here."

ROLFZEN STEPS UP

Cook said he was looking for more offense from rightside hitter Amber Rolfzen. He definitely got that in back-to-back matches against Iowa at the end of September.

The sophomore from Papillion-La Vista South hit .625 with 16 kills in the first match against the Hawkeyes, and then .526 with 11

kills in the second.

"They let her go one-on-one, which I would do, and she took advantage of it," Cook said. "I also think she had a little different mindset this past week than she's had in the past. I think that helped change that. It's good to see when players are able to work on things and step up. Now she has to do it over a long period of time."

Cook did have a tough message for Rolfzen though. He wasn't happy with her defensive play, so he subbed in for her in the back row for the second match.

"I'd like Amber to be six rotations," Cook said. "She has to play defense, pass and serve. If she's not doing that, then we have other kids that can do it, but ultimately we'd like to have her all the way around."

JUST RELAX AND PLAY

Senior setter Mary Pollmiller was still trying to establish her connection with the middle blockers heading into Big Ten play, but Cook definitely had seen some positive signs. Pollmiller may have been trying too hard early in the season.

"She's definitely relaxed. I don't envy the guy that marries her some day," Cook said with a laugh. "She is tough. I love coaching Mary. She's awesome, but she does need to keep relaxing and just play. I think she's figuring that out."

FINDING A BALANCE

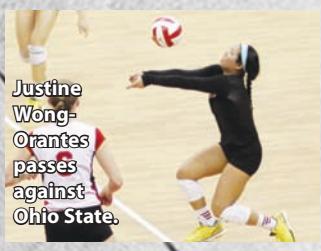
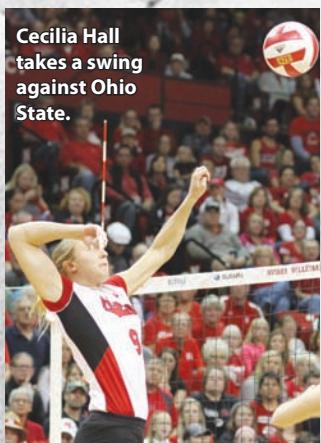
Every now and then in the Big Ten, teams have to play on back-to-back nights. It happens just twice this season for the Huskers, last weekend against Penn State and Ohio State and again on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 against Rutgers and Maryland.

Cook said that can be tough to do.

"It's not a physical thing," Cook said. "It's more emotional. That's why you have to have a balance in the Big Ten playing back-to-back. You have to be good both nights. We have to hope Iowa (Nebraska's travel partner) is good so these teams have to work hard and spend some energy in Iowa before they get here."

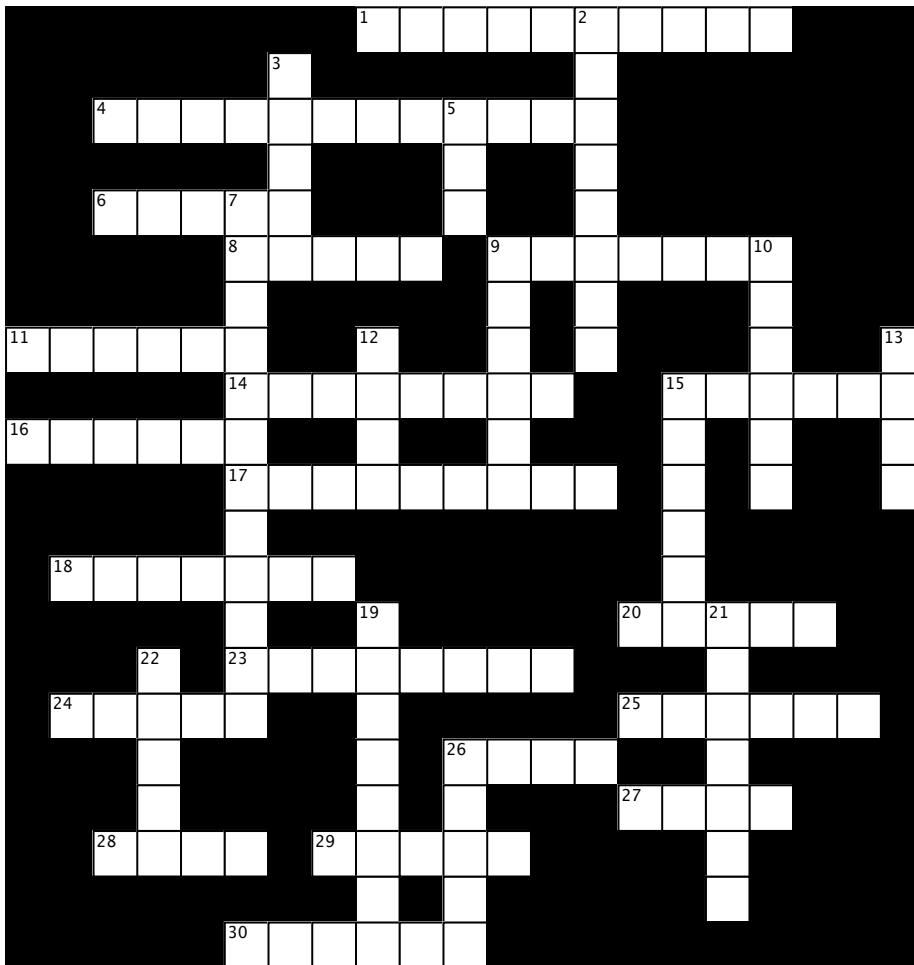
"You can't put too much into one match. You have to be ready each night."

Nebraska defeated Penn State on Friday night in four sets and came back and downed Ohio State on Saturday.



Crossword/Cartoon

OCTOBER 18 CROSSWORD PUZZLE



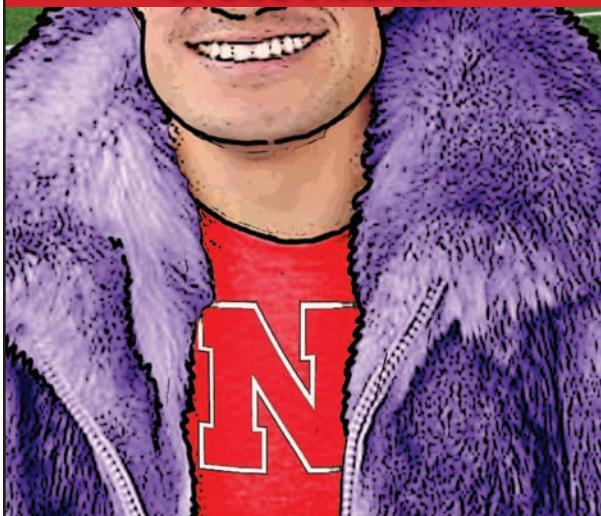
ACROSS

1. Northwestern head coach
4. 2015 non-conference opponent
6. Had 2 interceptions vs. Illinois
8. Wears No. 34 (offense)
9. Oct. 25 opponent
11. Wears No. 56 (offense)
14. Leading tackler vs. Illinois
15. Northwestern school color
16. Wears No. 68 (offense)
17. Ex-Husker defensive back now with New York Giants
18. Had 2.5 sacks vs. Illinois
20. Wears No. 71 (offense)
23. Vincent Valentine's home state
24. Rushed for career-high 109 yards vs. Illinois
25. 2001 Davey O'Brien Award winner
26. Leading receiver vs. Illinois
27. Greg McMullen's home state
28. Backup quarterback
29. Northwestern's bowl game after 2012 season
30. Head strength coach

DOWN

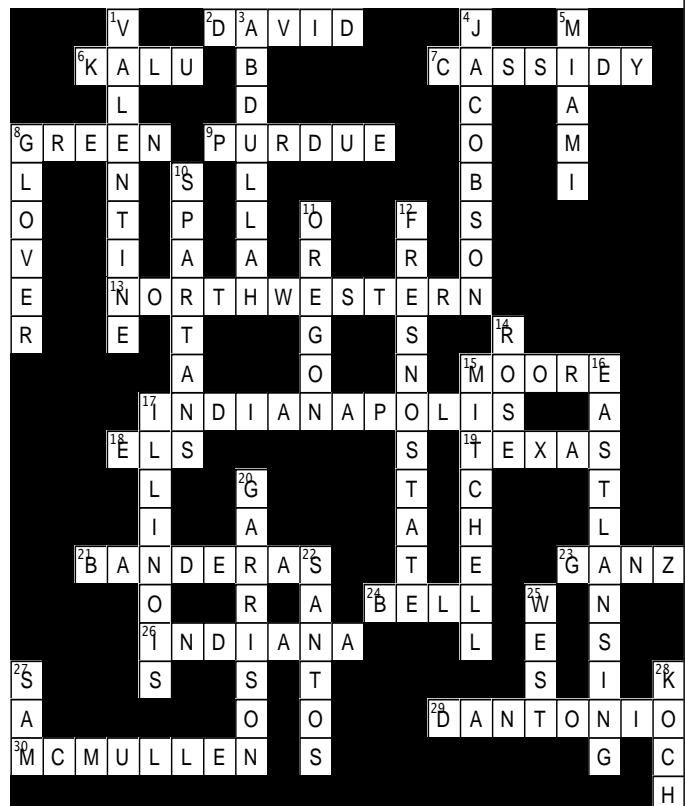
2. Northwestern campus site
3. Number of Ameer Abdullah touchdowns vs. Illinois
5. Network for NU-Northwestern telecast
7. City for Big Ten Championship game
9. 2000 Rimington Award winner
10. Wears No. 57 (offense)
12. Quarterbacks coach
13. Scored touchdown for Washington Redskins in Week 3
15. Nov. 1 opponent
19. Northwestern nickname
21. 2016 non-conference opponent
22. Wears No. 74 (offense)
26. Running backs coach

Prognostications of Joe Husker



Nebraska stays warm with a Wildcat coat. Huskers go to Northwestern and skins them again.

OCTOBER 4 CROSSWORD SOLUTION



THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

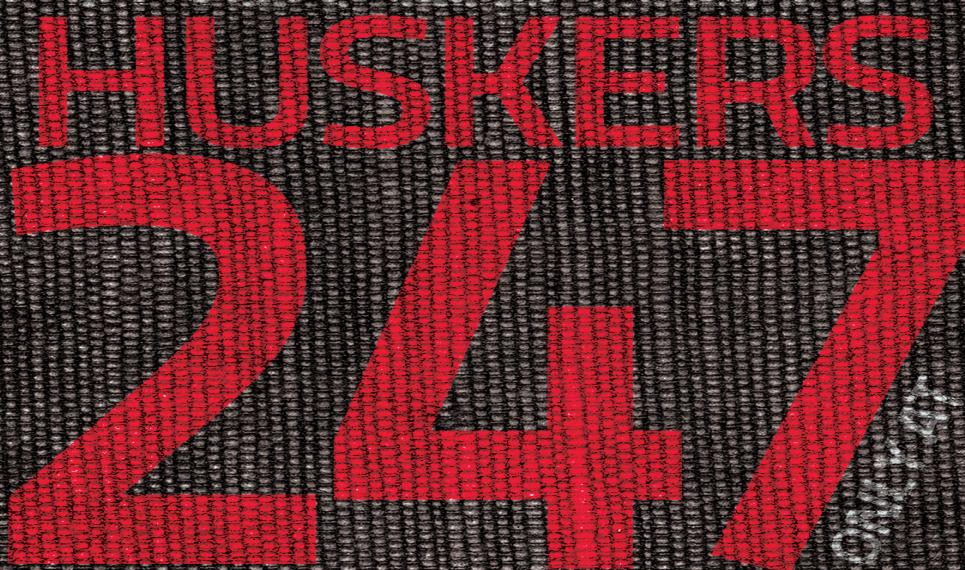
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